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THE

WORKS

OF

Dr. Jonathan Swift,

Dean of St. Patrick's, Dublin.

VOLUME III.

LONDON,

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PREFACE.

PREFACE.

THE Papers that compoſe the firſt of theſe volumes where printed about eighteen years ago, to which there are now added two or three ſmall tracts; and the verſes are transferred into the fourth volume apart, with the addition of ſuch others as we ſince have written. The ſecond and third will conſiſt of ſeveral ſmall treatiſes in proſe, in which a friend or two is concerned with us.

Having both of us been extremely ill treated by ſome bookſellers, eſpecially one *Edmund Curll*, it was our opinion that the beſt method we could take for juſtifying ourſelves, would be to publiſh whatever looſe papers, in proſe and verſe, we have formerly written; not only ſuch as have already ſtolen into the world (very much to our regret, and perhaps very little to our credit) but ſuch, as in any probability hereafter may run the ſame fate; having been obtained from us by the importunity, and divulged by the indiſcretion of friends, although reſtrained by promiſes, which few of them are ever known

to obſerve, and often think they make us a compliment in breaking.

But the conſequences have been ſtill worſe: We have been entitled, and have had our names prefixed at length, to whole volumes of mean productions, equally offenſive to good manners and good ſenſe, which we never ſaw nor heard of till they appeared in print.

For a *forgery* in ſetting a falſe name to a writing which may prejudice another's fortune, the law puniſhes the offender with the loſs of his *ears*; but has inflicted no adequate penalty for ſuch, as prejudice another's reputation in doing the ſame thing in print; though all and every individual book, ſo ſold under a falſe name, are manifeſtly ſo many ſeveral and multiplied forgeries.

Indeed we hoped, that the good nature, or at leaſt the good judgment of the world, would have cleared us from the imputation of ſuch things, as had been thus charged upon us by the malice of enemies, the want of judgment in friends, the unconcern of indifferent perſons, and the confident aſſertions of bookſellers.

We

We are aſhamed to find ſo ill a taſte prevail, as to make it a neceſſary work to do this juſtice to ourſelves. It is very poſſible for any author to write below himſelf; either his ſubject not proving ſo fruitful, or fitted for him, as he at firſt imagined; or his health, or his humour, or the preſent diſpoſition of his mind, unqualifying him at that juncture: However, if he poſſeſſed any diſtinguiſhing marks of ſtyle, or peculiarity of thinking, there would remain in his leaſt ſucceſsful writings ſome few tokens, whereby perſons of taſte might diſcover him.

But ſince it hath otherwiſe fallen out, we think we have ſufficiently paid for our want of prudence, and determine for the future to be leſs communicative: Or rather, having done with ſuch amuſements, we are reſolved to give up what we cannot fairly diſown, to the ſeverity of criticks, the malice of perſonal enemies, and the indulgence of friends.

We are ſorry for the ſatire interſperſed in ſome of theſe pieces upon a few people, from whom the higheſt provocations have been received, and who by their con-

duct ſince have ſhewn, that they have not yet forgiven us the wrong they did. It is a very unlucky circumſtance, to be obliged to retaliate the injuries of ſuch authors, whoſe works are ſo ſoon forgotten, that we are in danger already of appearing the firſt aggreſſors. It is to be lamented, that *Virgil* let paſs a line, which told poſterity he had two enemies called *Bavius* and *Mævius*. The wiſeſt way is not once to name them, but (as the madman adviſed the gentleman who told him he wore a ſword to kill his enemies) *to let them alone and they will die of themſelves*. And according to this rule we have acted throughout all thoſe writings, which we deſigned for the preſs: but in theſe, the publication whereof was not owing to our folly, but that of others, the omiſſion of the names was not in our power. At the worſt, we can only give them that liberty now for ſomething, which they have ſo many years exerciſed for nothing, of railing and ſcribling againſt us. And it is ſome commendation, that we have not done it all this while, but avoided publickly to characterize any perſon without long experience. *Nonum prematur in annum*

num is a good rule for all writers, but chiefly for writers of characters; becauſe it may happen to thoſe, who vent praiſe or cenſure too precipitately, as it did to an eminent *Engliſh* poet, who celebrated a young nobleman for erecting *Dryden*'s monument upon a promiſe, which his lordſhip forgot, till it was done by another.

In regard to two perſons only we wiſh our raillery, though ever ſo tender, or reſentment, though ever ſo juſt, had not been indulged. We ſpeak of Sir *John Vanbrugh*, who was a man of wit, and of honour; and of Mr. *Addiſon*, whoſe name deſerves all reſpect from every lover of learning.

We cannot deny (and perhaps moſt writers of our kind have been in the ſame circumſtances) that in ſeveral parts of our lives, and according to the diſpoſitions we were in, we have written ſome things, which we may wiſh never to have thought on. Some ſallies of levity ought to be imputed to youth, (ſuppoſed in charity, as it was in truth, to be the time in which we wrote them;) others to the gaiety of our minds at certain junctures common

to all men. The publiſhing of theſe, which we cannot diſown, and without our conſent, is, I think, a greater injury, than that of aſcribing to us the moſt ſtupid productions, which we can wholly deny.

This has been uſually practiſed in other countries after a man's deceaſe; which in a great meaſure account for that manifeſt *inequality* found in the works of the beſt authors; the collectors only conſidering, that ſo many more ſheets raiſe the price of the book; and the greater fame a writer is in poſſeſſion of, the more of ſuch traſh he may bear to have tacked to him. Thus it is apparently the editor's intereſt to inſert, what the author's judgment had rejected; and care is always taken to interſperſe theſe additions in ſuch a manner, that ſcarce any book of conſequence can be bought, without purchaſing ſomething unworthy of the author along with it.

But in our own country it is ſtill worſe: Thoſe very bookſellers, who have ſupported themſelves upon an author's fame while he lived, have done their utmoſt after his death to leſſen it by ſuch practices: Even a man's

a man's laſt *will* is not ſecure from being expoſed in print; whereby his moſt particular regards, and even his dying tenderneſſes are laid open. It has been humorouſly ſaid, that ſome have fiſhed the very jakes for papers left there by men of wit: But it is no jeſt to affirm, that the cabinets of the ſick, and the cloſets of the dead, have been broke open and ranſacked to publiſh our *private letters*, and divulge to all mankind the moſt ſecret ſentiments and intercourſe of friendſhip. Nay, theſe fellows are arrived to that height of impudence, that when an author has publickly diſowned a ſpurious Piece, they have diſputed his own name with him in printed advertiſements; which has been practiſed to Mr. *Congreve* and Mr. *Prior*.

We are therefore compelled, in reſpect to truth, to ſubmit to a very great hardſhip; to own ſuch pieces, as in our ſtricter judgments we would have ſuppreſſed for ever: We are obliged to confeſs, that this whole collection, in a manner, conſiſts of what we not only thought unlikely to reach the future, but unworthy even of the *preſent* age; not our ſtudies, but our

follies; not our works, but our idleneſſes.

Some comfort however it is, that all of them are innocent, and moſt of them, ſlight as they are, had yet a moral tendency; either to ſoften the virulence of parties againſt each other; or to laugh out of countenance ſome vice or folly of the time; or to diſcredit the impoſitions of quacks and falſe pretenders to ſcience; or to humble the arrogance of the ill-natured and envious; in a word, to leſſen the *vanity*, and promote the *good humour* of mankind.

Such as they are, we muſt in truth confeſs, they are *ours*, and others ſhould in juſtice believe, they are *all* that are *ours*. If any think elſe has been printed, in which we really had any hand, it is either intolerably imperfect, or loaded with ſpurious additions; ſometimes even with inſertions of mens names, which we never meant, and for whom we have an eſteem and reſpect. Even theſe pieces, in which we are leaſt injured, have never before been printed from the true copies, or with any tolerable degree of correctneſs. We declare, that this collection contains every piece, which in the idleſt humour we have written;

ten; not only ſuch, as came under our review or correction; but many others, which however unfiniſhed, are not now in our power to ſuppreſs. Whatſoever was in our own poſſeſſion at the publiſhing hereof, or of which no copy was gone abroad, we have actually deſtroyed, to prevent all poſſibility of the like treatment.

Theſe volumes likewiſe will contain all the papers, wherein we have caſually had any ſhare; particularly thoſe written in conjunction with our friends, Dr. *Arbuthnot* and Mr. *Gay*; and laſtly, all of this ſort compoſed ſingly by either of thoſe hands. The reader is therefore deſired to do the ſame juſtice to theſe our friends, as to us; and to be aſſured that all the *things*, called our *miſcellanies* (except the works of *Alexander Pope*, publiſhed by *B. Lintot*, in *quarto*, and *folio* in 1717; thoſe of Mr. *Gay* by *J. Tonſon*, in *quarto*, in 1720; and as many of theſe miſcellanies as have been formerly printed by *Benj. Tooke*) are abſolutely ſpurious, and without our conſent impoſed upon the publick.

Twickenham,
May 27, 1727.

JONATH. SWIFT,
ALEX. POPE.

THE

THE following diſcourſe is a kind of remonſtrance in behalf of king *William* and his friends, againſt the proceedings of the houſe of commons; and was publiſhed during the receſs of parliament in the ſummer of 1701, with a view to engage them in milder meaſures when they ſhould meet again.

At this time *Lewis* XIV. was making large ſtrides towards univerſal monarchy; plots were carrying on at *St. Germains*; the *Dutch* had acknowledged the duke of *Anjou* as king of *Spain*, and king *William* was made extremely uneaſy by the violence with which many of his miniſters and chief favourites were purſued by the commons; the king, to appeaſe their reſentment, had made ſeveral changes in his miniſtry, and removed ſome of his moſt faithful ſervants from places of the higheſt truſt and dignity: this expedient, however, had proved ineffectual, and the commons perſiſted in their oppoſition; they began by impeaching *William Bentinck*, earl of *Portland*, groom of the ſtole; and proceeded to the impeachment of *John Somers*, baron *Somers of Eveſham*, firſt lord-keeper, afterwards lord chancellor; *Edward Ruſſel*, earl of *Orford*, lord treaſurer of the navy, and one of the lords commiſſioners of the admiralty; and *Charles Mountague*, earl of *Halifax*, one of the commiſſioners of the treaſury, and afterwards chancellor of the exchequer. Its general purport is to damp the warmth of the commons by ſhewing, that the meaſures they purſued had a direct tendency to bring on the tyranny, which they profeſſed to oppoſe; and the particular caſes of the impeached lords are paralleled in *Athenian* characters.

A

DISCOURSE

OF THE

CONTESTS and DISSENTIONS

BETWEEN THE

NOBLES and the COMMONS

IN

ATHENS and ROME;

With the Conſequences they had upon both thoſe STATES.

——— *Si tibi vera videtur,*
Dede manus, & ſi falſa eſt, accingere contra. LUCR.

Written in the Year 1701.

CHAP. I.

IT is agreed, that in all government there is an abſolute unlimited power, which naturally and originally ſeems to be placed in the whole body, where-ever the executive part of it lies. This holds in the body natural; for where-ever we place the beginning

ginning of motion, whether from the head, or the heart, or the animal ſpirits in general, the body moves and acts by a conſent of all its parts. This unlimited power, placed fundamentally in the body of a people, is what the beſt legiſlators of all ages have endeavoured, in their ſeveral ſchemes or inſtitutions of government, to depoſite in ſuch hands as would preſerve the people from rapine and oppreſſion within, as well as violence from without. Moſt of them ſeem to agree in this, that it was a truſt too great to be committed to any one man or aſſembly, and therefore they left the right ſtill in the whole body; but the adminiſtration or executive part in the hands of the *one*, the *few*, or the *many*, into which three powers all independent bodies of men ſeem naturally to divide; for by all I have read of thoſe innumerable and petty commonwealths in *Italy*, *Greece*, and *Sicily*, as well as the great ones of *Carthage* and *Rome*, it ſeems to me, that a free people met together, whether by *compact*, or *family-government*, as ſoon as they fall into any acts of civil ſociety, do of themſelves divide into three powers. The firſt is that

of

of ſome one eminent ſpirit, who, having ſignalized his valour and fortune in defence of his country, or by the practice of popular arts at home, comes to have great influence on the people, to grow their leader in warlike expeditions, and to preſide, after a ſort, in their civil aſſemblies; and this is grounded upon the principles of nature and common reaſon, which in all difficulties or dangers, where prudence or courage is required, do rather incite us to fly for counſel or aſſiſtance to a ſingle perſon, than a multitude. The ſecond natural diviſion of power is of ſuch men, who have acquired large poſſeſſions, and conſequently dependancies, or deſcend from anceſtors who have left them great inheritances, together with an hereditary authority. Theſe eaſily uniting in thoughts and opinions, and acting in concert, begin to enter upon meaſures for ſecuring their properties, which are beſt upheld by preparing againſt invaſions from abroad, and maintaining piece at home; this commences a great council or ſenate of nobles for the weighty affairs of the nation. The laſt diviſion is of the maſs

or

or body of the people, whoſe part of power is great and indiſputable, whenever they can unite either collectively, or by deputation, to exert it. Now the three forms of government, ſo generally known in the ſchools, differ only by the civil adminiſtration being placed in the hands of one, or ſometimes two, (as in *Sparta*) who were called *kings*; or in a ſenate, who were called the *nobles*; or in the people collective or repreſentative, who may be called the *commons*. Each of theſe had frequently the executive power in *Greece*, and ſometimes in *Rome*: but the power in the laſt reſort was always meant by legiſlators to be held in balance among all three. And it will be an eternal rule in politicks among every free people, that there is a balance of power to be carefully held by every ſtate within itſelf, as well as among ſeveral ſtates with each other.

The true meaning of a balance of power, either without or within a ſtate, is beſt conceived by conſidering, what the nature of a balance is. It ſuppoſes three things: Firſt, the part which is held, together with the hand that holds it; and then the two ſcales,

ſcales, with whatever is weighed therein. Now conſider ſeveral ſtates in a neighbourhood; in order to preſerve peace between theſe ſtates, it is neceſſary they ſhould be formed into a balance, whereof one or more are to be directors, who are to divide the reſt into equal ſcales, and upon occaſion remove from one into the other, or elſe fall with their own weight into the lighteſt; ſo in a ſtate within itſelf, the balance muſt be held by a third hand, who is to deal the remaining power with the utmoſt exactneſs into the ſeveral ſcales. Now it is not neceſſary, that the power ſhould be equally divided between theſe three; for the balance may be held by the weakeſt, who, by his addreſs and conduct, removing from either ſcale, and adding of his own, may keep the ſcales duly poiſed. Such was that of the two kings of *Sparta*, the conſular power in *Rome*, that of the kings of *Media* before the reign of *Cyrus*, as repreſented by *Xenophon*; and that of the ſeveral limited ſtates in the *Gothick* Inſtitution.

When the balance is broken, whether by the negligence, folly, or weakneſs of the

the hand that held it, or by mighty weights fallen into either ſcale, the power will never continue long in equal diviſion between the two remaining parties, but, till the balance is fixed anew, will run entirely into one. This gives the trueſt account of what is underſtood in the moſt antient and approved *Greek* authors by the word *Tyranny*, which is not meant for the ſeizing of the uncontrolled or abſolute power into the hands of a ſingle perſon, (as many ſuperficial men have groſly miſtaken,) but for the breaking of the balance by whatever hand, and leaving the power wholly in one ſcale: For *tyranny* and *uſurpation* in a ſtate are by no means confined to any number, as might eaſily appear from examples enough; and becauſe the point is material, I ſhall cite a few to prove it.

The * *Romans* having ſent to *Athens*, and the *Greek* cities of *Italy*, for the copies of the beſt laws, choſe ten legiſlators to put them into form, and during the exerciſe of their office, ſuſpended the conſular power, leaving the adminiſtration of

* Dionyſ. Hal. lib. 10.

affairs

affairs in their hands. Theſe very men, though choſen for ſuch a work, as the digeſting a body of laws for the government of a free ſtate, did immediately uſurp arbitrary power, ran into all the forms of it, had their guards and ſpies after the practice of the tyrants of thoſe ages, affected kingly ſtate, deſtroyed the nobles, and oppreſſed the people; one of them proceeding ſo far, as to endeavour to force a lady of great virtue: the very crime, which gave occaſion to the expulſion of the regal power but ſixty years before, as this attempt did to that of the *Decemviri*.

The *Ephori* in *Sparta* were at firſt only certain perſons deputed by the kings to judge in civil matters, while *they* were employed in the wars. Theſe men at ſeveral times uſurped the abſolute authority, and were as cruel tyrants, as any in their age.

Soon * after the unfortunate expedition into *Sicily*, the *Athenians* choſe four hundred men for adminiſtration of affairs, who became a body of tyrants, and were called, in the language of thoſe

* Thucyd. lib. 8.

ages, an *oligarchy*, or tyranny of the *few*; under which hateful denomination they were ſoon after depoſed in great rage by the people.

When † *Athens* was ſubdued by *Lyſander*, he appointed thirty men for the adminiſtration of that city, who immediately fell into the rankeſt tyranny: but this was not all; for conceiving their power not founded on a *baſis* large enough, they admitted three thouſand into a ſhare of the government; and thus fortified, became the cruelleſt tyranny upon record. They murdered in cold blood great numbers of the beſt men, without any provocation, from the meer luſt of cruelty, like *Nero* or *Caligula*. This was ſuch a number of tyrants together, as amounted to near a third part of the whole city; for * *Xenophon* tells us, that the city contained about ten thouſand houſes; and allowing one man to every houſe, who could have any ſhare in the government, (the reſt conſiſting of women, children, and ſervants) and making other obvious abate-

† Xenoph. de Rebus Græc. l. 2. * Memorab. lib. 3.

ments,

ments, theſe tyrants, if they had been careful to adhere together, might have been a majority even of the people collective.

In † the time of the ſecond *Punick* war, the balance of power in *Carthage* was got on the ſide of the people, and this to a degree, that ſome authors reckon the government to have been then among them a *dominatio plebis*, or *tyranny of the commons*; which it ſeems they were at all times apt to fall into, and was at laſt among the cauſes, that ruined their ſtate: and the frequent murders of their generals, which ‡ *Diodorus* tells us was grown to an eſtabliſhed cuſtom among them, may be another inſtance, that tyranny is not confined to numbers.

I ſhall mention but one example more among a great number, that might be produced; ‖ it is related by the author laſt cited. The orators of the people at *Argos* (whether you will ſtyle them in modern phraſe, *great ſpeakers of the houſe*; or only, in general, repreſentatives of the people collective) ſtirred up the commons

† Polyb. Frag. lib. 6. ‡ Lib. 20. ‖ Lib. 15.

againſt the nobles, of whom 1600 were murdered at once; and at laſt, the orators themſelves, becauſe they left off their accuſations, or, to ſpeak intelligibly, becauſe they *withdrew their impeachments*; having, it ſeems, raiſed a ſpirit they were not able to lay. And this laſt circumſtance, as caſes have lately ſtood, may perhaps be worth noting.

From what hath been already advanced, ſeveral concluſions may be drawn:

Firſt, That a mixed government partaking of the known forms received in the ſchools is by no means of *Gothick* invention, but hath place in nature and reaſon, ſeems very well to agree with the ſentiments of moſt legiſlators, and to have been followed in moſt ſtates, whether they have appeared under the name of monarchies, ariſtocracies, or democracies: for not to mention the ſeveral republicks of this compoſition in *Gaul* and *Germany*, deſcribed by *Cæſar* and *Tacitus*, *Polybius* tells us, the beſt government is that, which conſiſts of three forms, * *regno*, *optima-*

* Fragm. lib. 6.

tium,

tium, & *populi imperio*; which may be fairly tranſlated, the *king*, *lords*, and *commons*. Such was that of *Sparta*, in its primitive inſtitution by *Lycurgus*; who, obſerving the corruptions and depravations to which every of theſe was ſubject, compounded his ſcheme out of all; ſo that it was made up of *reges*, *ſeniores*, & *populus*. Such alſo was the ſtate of *Rome* under its conſuls: and the author tells us, that the *Romans* fell upon this model purely by chance, (which I take to have been nature and common reaſon) but the *Spartans* by thought and deſign. And ſuch at *Carthage* was the † *ſumma reipublicæ*, or power in the laſt reſort; for they had their kings called *ſuffetes*, and a ſenate which had the power of *nobles*, and the *people* had a ſhare eſtabliſhed too.

Secondly, It will follow, That thoſe reaſoners, who employ ſo much of their zeal, their wit, and their leiſure for the upholding the balance of power in Chriſtendom, at the ſame time that by their practices they are endeavouring to deſtroy

* Id. ib.

it at home, are not ſuch mighty patriots, or ſo much in the true intereſt of their country, as they would affect to be thought; but ſeem to be employed like a man, who pulls down with his right hand what he has been building with his left.

Thirdly, This makes appear the error of thoſe, who think it an uncontrollable maxim, that power is always ſafer lodged in many hands than in one: for if theſe many hands be made up only from one of the three diviſions before mentioned, it is plain from thoſe examples already produced, and eaſy to be paralleled in other ages and countries, that they are as capable of enſlaving the nation, and of acting all manner of tyranny and oppreſſion, as it is poſſible for a ſingle perſon to be, though we ſhould ſuppoſe their number not only to be of four or five hundred, but above three thouſand.

Again, It is manifeſt from what has been ſaid, that in order to preſerve the balance in a mixed ſtate, the limits of power depoſited with each party ought to be aſcertained, and generally known. The defect of this is the cauſe, that introduces

thoſe

thoſe ſtrugglings in a ſtate about *prerogative* and *liberty*, about encroachments of the *few* upon the rights of the *many*, and of the *many* upon the privileges of the *few*, which ever did, and ever will conclude in a tyranny; firſt either of the *few*, or the *many*, but at laſt infallibly of a ſingle perſon: for, whichever of the three diviſions in a ſtate is upon the ſcramble for more power than its own, (as one or other of them generally is unleſs due care be taken by the other two, upon every new queſtion that ariſes, they will be ſure to decide in favour of themſelves, talk much of inherent right: they will nouriſh up a dormant power, and reſerve privileges *in petto*, to exert upon occaſions, to ſerve expedients, and to urge upon neceſſities; they will make large demands, and ſcanty conceſſions, ever coming off conſiderable gainers: thus at length the balance is broke, and tyranny let in; from which door of the three it matters not.

To pretend to a *declarative* right upon any occaſion whatſoever, is little leſs than to make uſe of the whole power; that is, to declare an opinion to be law, which

has always been conteſted, or perhaps never ſtarted at all before ſuch an incident brought it on the ſtage. Not to conſent to the enacting of ſuch a law, which has no view beſides the general good, unleſs another law ſhall at the ſame time paſs, with no other view but that of advancing the power of one party alone; what is this but to claim a poſitive voice, as well as a negative? * To pretend that great changes and alienations of property have created new and great dependencies, and conſequently new additions of power, as ſome reaſoners have done, is a moſt dangerous tenet. If dominion muſt follow property, let it follow in the ſame pace; for change in property through the bulk of a nation makes ſlow marches, and its due power always attends it. To conclude, that whatever attempt is begun by an aſſembly, ought to be purſued to the end, without regard to the greateſt incidents that may

* This ſeems to allude to a practice of the houſe of commons called *Tacking*: when they ſuſpected that a favourite bill would be rejected, they tacked it to a money-bill; and as it was not poſſible to proceed without the ſupply, and as it became neceſſary to reject or receive both the bills thus tacked together, this expedient perfectly anſwered its purpoſe.

happen

happen to alter the caſe: to count it mean, and below the *dignity of a houſe*, to quit a proſecution; to reſolve upon a concluſion before it is poſſible to be appriſed of the premiſes: to act thus, I ſay, is to affect not only abſolute power, but infallibility too. Yet ſuch unaccountable proceedings as theſe have popular aſſemblies engaged in, for want of fixing the due limits of *power* and *privilege*.

Great Changes may indeed be made in a government, yet the form continue, and the balance be held: but large intervals of time muſt paſs between every ſuch innovation, enough to melt down and make it of a piece with the conſtitution. Such, we are told, were the proceedings of *Solon*, when he modelled anew the *Athenian* common-wealth; and what convulſions in our own, as well as other ſtates, have been bred by a neglect of this rule, is freſh and notorious enough: it is too ſoon in all conſcience to repeat this error again.

Having ſhewn, that there is a natural balance of power in all free ſtates, and how it hath been divided, ſometimes by the people themſelves, as in *Rome*, at others by the

the inſtitutions of the legiſlators, as in the ſeveral ſtates of *Greece* and *Sicily*; the next thing is to examine, what methods have been taken to break or overthrow this balance, which every one of the three parties hath continually endeavoured, as opportunities have ſerved; as might appear from the ſtories of moſt ages and countries: for abſolute power in a particular ſtate, is of the ſame nature with univerſal monarchy in ſeveral ſtates adjoining to each other. So endleſs and exorbitant are the deſires of men, whether conſidered in their perſons or their ſtates, that they will graſp at all, and can form no ſcheme of perfect happineſs with leſs. Ever ſince men have been united into governments, the hopes and endeavours after univerſal monarchy have been bandied among them, from the reign of *Ninus* to this of the *moſt chriſtian king*; in which purſuits commonwealths have had their ſhare as well as monarchs: ſo the *Athenians*, the *Spartans*, the *Thebans*, and the *Achaians*, did ſeveral times aim at the univerſal monarchy of *Greece*: ſo the common wealths of *Carthage* and *Rome* affected the univerſal.

ſal monarchy of the then known world. In like manner hath abſolute power been purſued by the ſeveral parties of each particular ſtate; wherein ſingle perſons have met with moſt ſucceſs, though the endeavours of the *few* and the *many* have been frequent enough: yet, being neither ſo uniform in their deſigns, nor ſo direct in their views, they neither could manage nor maintain the power they had got; but were ever deceived by the popularity and ambition of ſome ſingle perſon. So that it will be always a wrong ſtep in policy, for the *nobles* or *commons* to carry their endeavours after power ſo far, as to overthrow the balance: and it would be enough to damp their warmth in ſuch purſuits, if they could once reflect, that in ſuch a courſe they will be ſure to run upon the very rock, that they meant to avoid; which, I ſuppoſe they would have us think, is the tyranny of a ſingle perſon.

Many examples might be produced of the endeavours of each of theſe three rivals after abſolute power; but I ſhall ſuit my diſcourſe to the time I am writing in, and relate only ſuch diſſentions in *Greece* and

and *Rome*, between the *nobles* and *commons*, with the conſequences of them, wherein the latter were the aggreſſors.

I ſhall begin with *Greece*, where my obſervation ſhall be confined to *Athens*, though ſeveral inſtances might be brought from other ſtates thereof.

CHAP. II.

Of the diſſentions in ATHENS, *between the* few *and the* many.

THESEUS is the firſt, who is recorded with any appearance of truth to have brought the *Grecians* from a barbarous manner of life, among ſcattered villages, into cities; and to have eſtabliſhed the *popular ſtate* in *Athens*, aſſigning to himſelf the guardianſhip of the laws and chief command in war. He was forced after ſome time to leave the *Athenians* to their own meaſures upon account of their ſeditious temper, which ever continued with them, till the final diſſolution of their government by the *Romans*. It ſeems, the country about *Attica* was the moſt barren of any in *Greece*; through

through which means it happened, that the natives were never expelled by the fury of invaders, (who thought it not worth a conqueſt) but continued always *Aborigines*; and therefore retained through all revolutions a tincture of that turbulent ſpirit, wherewith their government began. This inſtitution of *Theſeus* appears to have been rather a ſort of mixed monarchy, than a popular ſtate, and for aught we know, might continue ſo during the ſeries of kings till the death of *Codrus*. From this laſt prince *Solon* was ſaid to be deſcended; who, finding the people engaged in two violent factions of the poor and the rich, and in great confuſion thereupon; refuſing the monarchy, which was offered him, choſe rather to caſt the government after another model, wherein he made due proviſions for ſettling the balance of power, chuſing a ſenate of four hundred, and diſpoſing the magiſtracies and offices according to men's eſtates; leaving to the multitude their votes in electing, and the power of judging certain proceſſes by appeal. This council of four hundred was choſen, one hundred out of each

each tribe, and ſeems to have been a body repreſentative of the people: though the people collective reſerved a ſhare of power to themſelves. It is a point of hiſtory perplexed enough; but thus much is certain, that the balance of power was provided for; elſe *Piſiſtratus*, called by authors the tyrant of *Athens*, could never have governed ſo peaceably, as he did, * without changing any of *Solon*'s laws. Theſe ſeveral powers, together with that of the *archon* or chief magiſtrate, made up the form of government in *Athens*, at what time it began to appear upon the ſcene of action and ſtory.

The firſt great man bred up under this inſtitution was *Miltiades*, who lived about ninety years after *Solon*, and is reckoned to have been the firſt great captain, not only of *Athens*, but of all *Greece*. From the time of *Miltiades* to that of *Phocion*, who is looked upon as the laſt famous general of *Athens*, are about 130 years: after which they were ſubdued and inſulted by *Alexander*'s captains, and continued

* Herodot. lib. 1.

under

under ſeveral revolutions a ſmall truckling ſtate, of no name or reputation, till they fell with the reſt of *Greece* under the power of the *Romans*.

During this period from *Miltiades* to *Phocion*, I ſhall trace the conduct of the *Athenians* with relation to their diſſentions between the people and ſome of their generals; who at that time, by their power and credit in the army, in a warlike commonwealth, and often ſupported by each other, were with the magiſtrates and other civil officers a ſort of counterpoiſe to the power of the people, who ſince the death of *Solon* had already made great encroachments. What theſe diſſentions were, how founded, and what the conſequences of them, I ſhall briefly and impartially relate.

I muſt here premiſe, that the *nobles* in *Athens* were not at this time a corporate aſſembly, that I can gather; therefore the reſentments of the Commons were uſually turned againſt particular perſons, and by way of articles of impeachment. Whereas the commons in *Rome*, and ſome other ſtates, as will appear in a proper place, tho' they

they followed this method upon occaſion, yet generally purſued the enlargement of their power by more ſet quarrels of one entire aſſembly againſt another. However, the cuſtom of particular impeachments being not limited to former ages, any more than that of general ſtruggles and diſſentions between fixed aſſemblies of nobles and commons, and the ruin of *Greece* having been owing to the former, as that of *Rome* was to the latter, I ſhall treat on both expreſly; that thoſe ſtates who are concerned in either (if at leaſt there be any ſuch now in the world) may, by obſerving the means and iſſues of former diſſentions, learn whether the cauſes are alike in theirs; and if they find them to be ſo, may conſider whether they ought not juſtly to apprehend the ſame effects.

To ſpeak of every particular perſon impeached by the Commons of *Athens* within the compaſs deſigned, would introduce the hiſtory of almoſt every great man they had among them: I ſhall therefore take notice only of ſix, who living in that period of time when *Athens* was at the height of its glory, as indeed it could not be otherwiſe

therwiſe while ſuch hands were at the helm, though *impeached for high crimes and miſdemeanors*, ſuch as *bribery*, *arbitrary proceedings*, *miſapplying or embezzling publick funds*, *ill conduct at ſea*, and the like, were honoured and lamented by their country, as the preſervers of it, and have had the veneration of all ages ſince paid juſtly to their memories.

Miltiades was one of the *Athenian* generals againſt the *Perſian* power, and the famous victory at *Marathon* was chiefly owing to his valour and conduct. Being ſent ſome time after to reduce the iſland *Paros*, he miſtook a great fire at a diſtance for the fleet, and being no ways a match for them, ſet ſail for *Athens*; at his arrival he was *impeached* by the commons for treachery, though not able to appear by reaſon of his wounds, fined 30000 crowns, and died in priſon. Though the conſequences of this proceeding upon the affairs of *Athens* were no other than the untimely loſs of ſo great and good a man, yet I could not forbear relating it.

Their next great man was *Ariſtides* †.

† Lord *Somers*. He was the general patron of the *literati*. ORRERY.

Beſides the mighty ſervice he had done his country in the wars, he was a perſon of the ſtricteſt juſtice, and beſt acquainted with the laws as well as forms of their government, ſo that he was in a manner *chancellor of Athens*. This man, upon a ſlight and falſe accuſation of *favouring arbitrary power*, was baniſhed by *oſtraciſm*; which rendered into modern *Engliſh* would ſignify, that they voted *he ſhould be removed from their preſence and council for ever*. But however, they had the wit to recall him, and to that action owed the preſervation of their ſtate by his future ſervices. For it muſt be ſtill confeſſed in behalf of the *Athenian* people, that they never conceived themſelves perfectly infallible, nor arrived to the heights of *modern aſſemblies*, to make *obſtinacy* confirm what *ſudden heat* and *temerity* began. They thought it not below the dignity of an aſſembly to endeavour at correcting an ill ſtep; at leaſt to repent, though it often fell out too late.

Themiſtocles‡ was at firſt a *commoner* himſelf:

‡ Earl of *Orford*. He had been conſidered in a manner as lord high admiral, the whole affairs of the navy having been committed to his charge. ORRERY.

ſelf: it was he, that raiſed the *Athenians* to their greatneſs at ſea, which he thought to be the true and conſtant intereſt of that commonwealth; and the famous naval victory over the *Perſians* at *Salamais* was owing to his conduct. It ſeems the people obſerved ſomewhat of haughtineſs in his temper and behaviour, and therefore baniſhed him for five years; but finding ſome ſlight matter of accuſation againſt him, they ſent to ſeize his perſon, and he hardly eſcaped to the *Perſian* court; from whence, if the love of his country had not ſurmounted its baſe ingratitude to him, he had many invitations to return at the head of the *Perſian* fleet, and take a terrible revenge: but he rather choſe a voluntary death.

The people of *Athens* impeached *Pericles* † for *miſapplying the publick revenues to his*

† Lord *Halifax*. He had a fine genius for poetry, and had employed his more youthful part of life in that ſcience. He was diſtinguiſhed by the name of *Mouſe Mountague*, having ridiculed, jointly with Mat. Prior, Mr. Dryden's famous poem of the Hind and Panther; the parody is drawn from Horace's fable of the city mouſe and country mouſe: but afterwards, upon Mr. Mountague's promotion to the chancellorſhip of the exchequer, Prior, with a good-humoured indignation at ſeeing his friend preferred and himſelf neglected,

his own private uſe. He had been a perſon of great deſervings from the republick, was an *admirable ſpeaker*, and very popular. *His accounts were confuſed, and he could not then give them up*, therefore merely to divert that difficulty, and the conſequences of it, he was forced to engage his country in the *Peloponneſian* war, the longeſt that ever was known in *Greece*, and which ended in the utter ruin of *Athens*.

The ſame people having reſolved to ſubdue *Sicily*, ſent a mighty fleet under the command of *Nicias*, *Lyſimachus*, and *Alcibiades*; the two former perſons of age and experience; the laſt a young man of noble birth, excellent education, and a plentiful fortune. A little before the fleet ſet ſail, it ſeems one night the ſtone-images of *Mercury*, placed in ſeveral parts of the city, were all pared in the face: this action the *Athenians* interpreted for a deſign of deſtroying the popular ſtate; and *Alcibiades*, having been formerly noted for the

ed, concludes an epiſtle writ- wood Shepherd, Eſq; with
ten in the year 1698, to Fleet- theſe three lines:

My friend *Charles Mountague*'s preferr'd,
Nor would I have it long obſerv'd
That one *mouſe* eats while *tother*'s ſtarv'd. ORRERY.

like

like frolicks and excurſions, was immediately accuſed of this. He, whether conſcious of his innocence, or aſſured of the ſecrecy, offered to come to his trial before he went to his command; this the *Athenians* refuſed. But as ſoon as he was got to *Sicily*, they ſent for him back, deſigning to take the advantage, and proſecute him in the abſence of his friends, and of the army, where he was very powerful. It ſeems, he underſtood the reſentments of a popular aſſembly too well to truſt them; and therefore, inſtead of returning, eſcaped to *Sparta*; where his deſires of revenge prevailing over his love to his country, he became its greateſt enemy. Mean while the *Athenians* before *Sicily*, by the death of one commander, and the ſuperſtition, weakneſs, and perfect ill conduct of the other, were utterly deſtroyed, the whole fleet taken, and a miſerable ſlaughter made of the army, whereof hardly one ever returned. Some time after this *Alcibiades* was recalled upon his own conditions by the neceſſities of the people, and made chief commander at ſea and land; but his lieutenant engaging againſt

his poſitive orders, and being beaten by *Lyſander*, *Alcibiades* was again diſgraced, and baniſhed. However, the *Athenians* having loſt all ſtrength and heart ſince their misfortune at *Sicily*, and now deprived of the only perſon that was able to recover their loſſes, repent of their raſhneſs, and endeavour in vain for his reſtoration; the *Perſian* lieutenant, to whoſe protection he fled, making him a ſacrifice to the reſentments of *Lyſander* the general of the *Lacedemonians*, who now reduces all the dominions of the *Athenians*, takes the city, razes their walls, ruins their works, and changes the form of their government; which though again reſtored for ſome time by *Thraſybulus* (as their walls were rebuilt by *Conon)* yet here we muſt date the fall of the *Athenian* greatneſs; the dominion and chief power in *Greece* from that period to the time of *Alexander the Great*, which was about fifty years, being divided between the *Spartans* and *Thebans*. Though *Philip*, *Alexander*'s father *(the moſt chriſtian king* of that age) had indeed ſome time before begun to break in upon the republicks of *Greece* by conqueſt or *bribery*; parti-

particularly *dealing large money among ſome popular orators*, by which he brought many of them, as the term of art was then, to *Philippize*.

In the time of *Alexander* and his captains, the *Athenians* were offered an opportunity of recovering their liberty, and being reſtored to their former ſtate; but the wiſe turn they thought to give the matter, was by an impeachment and ſacrifice of the author, to hinder the ſucceſs. For, after the deſtruction of *Thebes* by *Alexander*, this prince deſigning the conqueſt of *Athens* was prevented by ‡ *Phocion* the *Athenian* general, then ambaſſador from that ſtate; who by his great wiſdom and ſkill at negotiations diverted *Alexander* from his deſign, and reſtored the *Athenians* to his favour. The very ſame ſucceſs he had with *Antipater* after *Alexander*'s death, at which time the government was new regulated by *Solon*'s laws: But *Polyperchon*, in hatred to *Phocion*, having by order of the young king, whoſe governor he was, reſtored thoſe whom

* The earl of *Portland*. ORRERY.

Phocion had baniſhed, the plot ſucceeded. *Phocion* was accuſed by popular orators, and put to death.

Thus was the moſt powerful commonwealth of all *Greece*, after great degeneracies from the inſtitution of *Solon*, utterly deſtroyed by that raſh, jealous, and inconſtant humour of the people, which was never ſatisfied to ſee a general either *victorious* or *unfortunate*; ſuch ill judges, as well as rewarders, have *popular aſſemblies* been, of thoſe who beſt deſerved from them.

Now the circumſtance, which makes theſe examples of more importance, is, that this very power of the people in *Athens*, claimed ſo confidently for an *inherent right*, and inſiſted on as the *undoubted privilege of an* Athenian *born*, was the rankeſt encroachment imaginable, and the groſſeſt degeneracy from the form that *Solon* left them. In ſhort, their government was grown into a *dominatio plebis*, or *tyranny of the people*, who by degrees had broke and overthrown the balance, which that legiſlator had very well fixed and provided for. This appears not only from what

what has been already ſaid of that lawgiver, but more manifeſtly from a paſſage in *Diodorus*; who tells us, † *That* Antipater, *one of* Alexander's *captains, abrogated the popular government (in* Athens) *and reſtored the power of ſuffrages and magiſtracy to ſuch only, as were worth two thouſand drachmas*; *by which means*, ſays he, *that republic came to be* [*again*] *adminiſtered by the laws of* Solon. By this quotation it is manifeſt that great author looked upon *Solon*'s inſtitution, and a popular government, to be two different things. And as for this reſtoration by *Antipater*, it had neither conſequence nor continuance worth obſerving.

I might eaſily produce many more examples, but theſe are ſufficient: and it may be worth the readers time to reflect a little on the merits of the cauſe, as well as of the men, who had been thus dealt with by their country. I ſhall direct him no further than by repeating, that *Ariſtides* was the moſt renowned by the people themſelves for his exact *juſtice and*

† Lib. 18.

know-

knowledge in the law; that *Themiſtocles* was a moſt fortunate admiral, and had got a *mighty victory over the great king of* Perſia's *fleet*; that *Pericles* was an *able miniſter of ſtate, an excellent orator, and a man of letters:* and laſtly, that *Phocion*, beſides the ſucceſs of his arms, was alſo renowned for his *negotiations abroad, having in an embaſſy brought the greateſt monarch of the world at that time to the terms of an honourable peace, by which his country was preſerved.*

I ſhall conclude my remarks upon *Athens* with the character given us of that people by *Polybius*. *About this time*, ſays he, *the* Athenians *were governed by two men; quite ſunk in their affairs; had little or no commerce with the reſt of* Greece, *and were become great reverencers of crowned heads.*

For, from the time of *Alexander*'s captains till *Greece* was ſubdued by the *Romans*, to the latter part of which this deſcription of *Polybius* falls in, *Athens* never produced one famous man either for councils or arms, or hardly for learning. And indeed it was a dark inſipid period through all

all *Greece:* for except the *Achaian* league under *Aratus* and *Philopæmen*; and the endeavours of *Agis* and *Cleomnes* to reſtore the ſtate of *Sparta*, ſo frequently harraſſed by tyrannies occaſioned by the popular practices of the *ephori*, there was very little worth recording. All which conſequences may perhaps be juſtly imputed to this degeneracy of *Athens*.

CHAP. III.

Of the diſſentions between the patricians and plebeians in Rome, *with the conſequences they had upon that ſtate.*

HAving in the foregoing chapter confined myſelf to the proceedings of the commons only by the method of *impeachments* againſt particular perſons, with the fatal effects they had upon the ſtate of *Athens*, I ſhall now treat of the diſſentions at *Rome* between the people and the collective body of the *patricians* or nobles. It is a large ſubject, but I ſhall draw it into as narrow a compaſs as I can.

As *Greece*, from the moſt ancient accounts we have of it, was divided into ſeveral

veral kingdoms, ſo was moſt part of *Italy* † into ſeveral petty commonwealths. And as thoſe kings in *Greece* are ſaid to have been depoſed by their people upon the ſcore of their arbitrary proceedings, ſo on the contrary the commonwealths of *Italy* were all ſwallowed up, and concluded in the tyranny of the *Roman* emperors. However, the differences between thoſe *Grecian* monarchies, and *Italian* republicks, were not very great: for, by the accounts *Homer* gives us of thoſe *Grecian* princes who came to the ſiege of *Troy*, as well as by ſeveral paſſages in the *Odyſſes*, it is manifeſt, that the power of theſe princes in their ſeveral ſtates was much of a ſize with that of the kings in *Sparta*, the archon at *Athens*, the ſuffetes at *Carthage*, and the conſuls in *Rome*: ſo that a limited and divided power ſeems to have been the moſt ancient and inherent principles of both thoſe people in matters of government. And ſuch did that of *Rome* continue from the time of *Romulus*, though with ſome interrupti-

† Dionyſ. Halicar.

ons,

ons to *Julius Cæſar*, when it ended in the tyranny of a ſingle perſon. During which period (not many years longer than from the *Norman* conqueſt to our age) the commons were growing by degrees into power and property, gaining ground upon the patricians, as it were, inch by inch, till at laſt they quite overturned the balance, leaving all doors open to the practices of popular and ambitious men, who deſtroyed the wiſeſt republick, and enſlaved the nobleſt people that ever entered upon the ſtage of the world. By what ſteps and degrees this was brought to paſs, ſhall be the ſubject of my preſent enquiry.

While *Rome* was governed by kings, the monarchy was altogether elective. *Romulus* himſelf, when he had built the city, was declared king by the univerſal conſent of the people, and by augury, which was there underſtood for *divine appointment*. Among other diviſions he made of the people, one was into *patricians* and *plebeians*: the former were like the barons of *England* ſome time after the conqueſt; and the latter are alſo deſcribed to be almoſt exactly

exactly what our commons were then. For they were dependants upon the patricians, whom they chose for their patrons and protectors, to answer for their appearance, and defend them in any process: they also supplied their patrons with money in exchange for their protection. This custom of *patronage*, it seems, was very antient, and long practised among the *Greeks*.

Out of these patricians *Romulus* chose an hundred to be a *senate*, or *grand council*, for advice and assistance to him in the administration. The senate therefore originally consisted all of *nobles*, and were of themselves a *standing council*, the *people* being only convoked upon such occasions, as by this institution of *Romulus* fell into their cognizance: those were to constitute magistrates, to give their votes for making laws, and to advise upon entering on a war. But the two former of these popular privileges were to be confirmed by authority of the senate; and the last was only permitted at the king's pleasure. This was the utmost extent of power pretended to by the *commons* in the time

time of *Romulus*; all the reſt being divided between the king and the ſenate; the whole agreeing very nearly with the conſtitution of *England* for ſome centuries after the conqueſt.

After a year's *inter-regnum* from the death of *Romulus* the ſenate of their own authority choſe a ſucceſſor, and a ſtranger, meerly upon the fame of his virtue, without aſking the conſent of the commons; which cuſtom they likewiſe obſerved in the two following kings. But in the election of *Tarquinius Priſcus*, the fifth king, we firſt hear mentioned, that it was done *populi impetratâ veniâ*; which indeed was but very reaſonable for a free people to expect; though I cannot remember, in my little reading, by what incidents they were brought to advance ſo great a ſtep. However it were, this prince in gratitude to the people, by whoſe conſent he was choſen, elected a hundred ſenators out of the commons, whoſe number, with former additions, was now amounted to three hundred.

The people having once diſcovered their own ſtrength, did ſoon take occaſion

ſion to exert it, and that by very great degrees. For at this king's death, who was murdered by the ſons of a former, being at a loſs for a ſucceſſor, *Servius Tullius*, a ſtranger, and of mean extraction, was choſen protector of the kingdom by the *people*, without the conſent of the ſenate; at which the nobles being diſpleaſed, he wholly applied himſelf to gratify the commons, and was by them declared and confirmed no longer protector, but king.

This prince firſt introduced the cuſtom of giving freedom to ſervants, ſo as to become citizens of equal privileges with the reſt, which very much contributed to increaſe the power of the *people*.

Thus in a very few years the commons proceeded ſo far, as to wreſt even the power of chuſing a king entirely out of the hands of the nobles; which was ſo great a leap, and cauſed ſuch a convulſion and ſtruggle in the ſtate, that the conſtitution could not bear it; but civil diſſentions aroſe, which immediately were followed by the tyranny of a ſingle perſon, as this was by the utter ſubverſion of the regal

govern-

government, and by a ſettlement upon a new foundation. For the nobles, ſpighted at this indignity done them by the commons, firmly united in a body, depoſed this prince by plain force, and choſe *Tarquin the Proud*, who running into all the forms and methods of tyranny, after a cruel reign, was expelled by an univerſal concurrence of nobles and people, whom the miſeries of his reign had reconciled.

When the conſular government began, the balance of power between the nobles and plebeians was fixed anew: the two firſt conſuls were nominated by the nobles, and confirmed by the commons; and a law was enacted, That no perſon ſhould bear any magiſtracy in *Rome*, *injuſſu populi*, that is, without *conſent of the commons*.

In ſuch turbulent times as theſe, many of the poorer citizens had contracted numerous debts either to the richer ſort among themſelves, or to ſenators and other nobles: and the caſe of debtors in *Rome* for the firſt four * centuries was, after

* Ab Urbe Condita. *From the building of the city.*

the ſet time for payment, no choice but either to pay or be the creditor's ſlave. In this juncture the commons leave the city in mutiny and diſcontent, and will not return but upon condition to be acquitted of all their debts; and moreover, that certain magiſtrates be choſen yearly, whoſe buſineſs it ſhall be to defend the commons from injuries. Theſe are called *tribunes* of the people, their perſons are held ſacred and inviolable, and the people bind themſelves by oath never to abrogate the office. By theſe tribunes, in proceſs of time, the people were groſly impoſed on to ſerve the turns and occaſions of revengeful or ambitious men, and to commit ſuch exorbitances as could not end, but in the diſſolution of the government.

Theſe tribunes, a year or two after their inſtitution, kindled great diſſentions between the nobles and the commons on the account of *Coriolanus*, a nobleman, whom the latter had *impeached*, and the conſequences of whoſe impeachment (if I had not confined myſelf to *Grecian* examples for that part of my ſubject) had like

like to have been ſo fatal to their ſtate. And from this time the tribunes began a cuſtom of accuſing to the people whatever nobles they pleaſed, ſeveral of whom were baniſhed or put to death in every age.

At this time the *Romans* were very much engaged in wars with their neighbouring ſtates; but upon the leaſt intervals of peace the quarrels between the nobles and the plebeians would revive; and one of the moſt frequent ſubjects of their differences was the *conquered lands*, which the commons would fain have divided among the publick; but the ſenate could not be brought to give their conſent. For ſeveral of the wiſeſt among the nobles began to apprehend the growing power of the people; and therefore knowing what an acceſſion thereof would accrue to them by ſuch an addition of property, uſed all means to prevent it: for this the *Appian* family was moſt noted, and thereupon moſt hated by the commons. One of them having made a ſpeech againſt this diviſion of lands, was impeached by the people of high treaſon, and a day appointed for his trial; but diſdaining to

make his defence, he choſe rather the uſual *Roman* remedy of killing himſelf: after whoſe death the commons prevailed, and the lands were divided among them.

This point was no ſooner gained, but new diſſentions began: for the plebeians would fain have a law enacted to lay all mens rights and privileges upon the ſame level; and to enlarge the power of every magiſtrate within his own juriſdiction, as much as that of the conſuls. The tribunes alſo obtained to have their number doubled, which before was five: and the author tells us, † that their inſolence and power encreaſed with their number, and the ſeditions were alſo doubled with it.

By the beginning of the fourth century from the building of *Rome*, the tribunes proceeded ſo far in the name of the commons, as to accuſe and fine the conſuls themſelves, who repreſented the kingly power. And the ſenate obſerving, how in all contentions they were forced to yield to the tribunes and people, thought it their wiſeſt courſe to give way alſo to

† Dionyſ. Halicar.

time;

time; therefore a decree was made to ſend ambaſſadors to *Athens*, and to the other *Grecian* common wealths planted in that part of *Italy* called *Græcian Major*, to make a collection of the beſt laws; out of which, and ſome of their own, a new complete body of law was formed, afterwards known by the name of the *laws of the twelve tables*.

To digeſt theſe laws into order, ten men were choſen, and the adminiſtration of all affairs left in their hands; what uſe they made of it has been already ſhewn. It was certainly a great revolution, produced entirely by the many unjuſt encroachments of the people; and might have wholly changed the fate of *Rome*, if the folly and vice of thoſe, who were chiefly concerned, could have ſuffered it to take root.

A few years after the commons made farther advances on the power of the nobles; demanding among the reſt that the conſulſhip, which hitherto had only been diſpoſed to the former, ſhould now lie in common to the pretenſions of any *Roman* whatſoever. This, though it failed at preſent, yet afterwards obtained, and was

a mighty ſtep to the ruin of the commonwealth.

What I have hitherto ſaid of *Rome*, has been chiefly collected out of that exact and diligent writer *Dionyſius Halicarnaſſeus*, whoſe hiſtory, through the injury of time, reaches no farther than to the beginning of the fourth century after the building of *Rome*. The reſt I ſhall ſupply from other authors; though I do not think it neceſſary to deduce this matter any further ſo very particularly, as I have hitherto done.

To point at what time the balance of power was moſt equally held between the *lords* and *commons* in *Rome*, would perhaps admit a controverſy. † *Polybius* tells us, that in the ſecond *Punick* war the *Carthaginians* were declining, becauſe the balance was got too much on the ſide of the people; whereas the *Romans* were in their greateſt vigour by the power remaining in the ſenate: yet this was between two and three hundred years after the period *Dionyſius* ends with; in which time

† Fragm. lib. 6.

the

the commons had made ſeveral further acquiſitions. This however muſt be granted, that (till about the middle of the fourth century) when the ſenate appeared reſolute at any time upon exerting their authority, and adhered cloſely together, they did often carry their point. † Beſides, it is obſerved by the beſt authors, that in all the quarrels and tumults at *Rome*, from the expulſion of the kings, though the people frequently proceeded to rude contumelious language, and ſometimes ſo far as to pull and hale one another about the *forum*, yet no blood was ever drawn in any popular commotions, till the time of the *Gracchi:* however, I am of opinion, that the balance had begun many years before to lean to the popular ſide. But this default was corrected, partly by the principle juſt mentioned, of never drawing blood in a tumult; partly by the warlike genius of the people, which in thoſe ages was almoſt perpetually employed; and partly by their great commanders, who by the credit they had in their armies fell into the ſcales as a fur-

† Dionyſ. Hal. Plutarch, &c.

their counterpoiſe to the growing power of the people. Beſides, *Polybius*, who lived in the time of *Scipio Africanus* the younger, had the ſame apprehenſions of the continual encroachments made by the commons; and being a perſon of as great abilities, and as much ſagacity, as any of his age, from obſerving the corruptions, which, he ſays, had already entered into the *Roman* conſtitution, did very nearly foretel what would be the iſſue of them. His words are very remarkable, and with little addition may be rendered to this purpoſe. ‡ *That thoſe abuſes and corruptions, which in time deſtroy a government, are ſown along with the very ſeeds of it, and both grow up together; and that as ruſt eats away iron, and worms devour wood, and both are a ſort of plagues born and bred along with the ſubſtance they deſtroy; ſo with every form and ſcheme of government that man can invent, ſome vice or corruption creeps in with the very inſtitution, which grows up along with, and at laſt deſtroys it.* † The ſame author in another place ven-

‡ Lib. 5. † Fragm. lib. 6.

tures

tures ſo far as to gueſs at the particular fate, which would attend the *Roman* government. He ſays, its ruin would ariſe from the popular tumults, which would introduce a *dominatio plebis*, or tyranny of the people; wherein it is certain he had reaſon, and therefore might have adventured to purſue his conjectures ſo far, as to the conſequences of a popular tyranny, which, as perpetual experience teaches, never fails to be followed by the arbitrary government of a ſingle perſon.

About the middle of the fourth century from the building of *Rome*, it was declared lawful for *nobles* and *plebeians* to intermarry; which cuſtom among many other ſtates has proved the moſt effectual means to ruin the former, and raiſe the latter.

And now the greateſt employments in the ſtate were one after another, by laws forcibly enacted by the *commons*, made free to the people, the *conſulſhip* itſelf, the office of *cenſor*, that of the *quæſtors* or *commiſſioners of the treaſury*, the office of *prætor* or chief juſtice, the *prieſthood*, and even that of *dictator*: the ſenate, after long oppoſition, yielding merely for preſent quiet

quiet to the continual urging clamours of the *commons*, and of the *tribunes* their advocates. A law was likewiſe enacted, that the *plebiſcita*, or a *vote of the houſe of commons*, ſhould be of univerſal obligation; nay, in time the method of enacting laws was wholly inverted; for whereas the ſenate uſed of old to confirm the *plebiſcita*, the people did at laſt, as they pleaſed, confirm or diſannul the ‡ *ſenatuſconſulta*.

Appius Claudius brought in a cuſtom of admitting to the ſenate the ſons of freed men, or of ſuch who had once been ſlaves; by which, and ſucceeding alterations of the like nature, that great council degenerated into a moſt corrupt and factious body of men, divided againſt itſelf; and its authority became deſpiſed.

The century and half following, to the end of the third *Punick* war by the deſtruction of *Carthage*, was a very buſy period at *Rome*; the intervals between every war being ſo ſhort, that the *tribunes* and *people* had hardly leiſure or breath to engage in domeſtick diſſentions: howe-

‡ Dionyſ. lib. 2.

ver,

ver, the little time they could ſpare, was generally employed the ſame way. So *Terentius Leo*, a *tribune*, is recorded to have baſely proſtituted the privileges of a *Roman* citizen, in perfect ſpight to the *nobles*. So the great *African Scipio* and his brother, after all their mighty ſervices, were impeached by an ungrateful *commons*.

However, the warlike genius of the people, and continual employment they had for it, ſerved to divert this humour from running into a head, till the age of the *Gracchi*.

Theſe perſons entering the ſcene in the time of a full peace, fell violently upon advancing the power of the people by reducing into practice all thoſe encroachments, which they had been ſo many years gaining. There were at that time certain *conquered lands* to be divided, beſide a *great private eſtate left by a king*: theſe the *tribunes*, by procurement of the elder *Gracchus*, declared by their legiſlative authority, were not to be diſpoſed of by the *nobles*, but by the *commons* only. The younger brother purſued the ſame deſign; and beſides, obtained a law, that all *Italians*

lians ſhould vote at elections, as well as the citizens of *Rome:* in ſhort, the whole endeavours of them both perpetually turned upon retrenching the *nobles* authority in all things, but eſpecially in the matter of *judicature.* And though they both loſt their lives in thoſe purſuits, yet they traced out ſuch ways, as were afterwards followed by *Marius*, *Sylla*, *Pompey* and *Cæſar*, to the ruin of the *Roman* freedom and greatneſs.

For in the time of *Marius*, *Saturninus* a tribune procured a law, that the ſenate ſhould be bound by oath to agree to whatever the people would enact: and *Marius* himſelf, while he was in that office of tribune, is recorded to have with great induſtry uſed all endeavours for depreſſing the *nobles*, and raiſing the people, particularly for cramping the former in their *power of judicature*, which was *their moſt ancient inherent right.*

Sylla by the ſame meaſures became abſolute tyrant of *Rome:* he added three hundred commons to the ſenate, which perplexed the power of the whole order, and rendered it ineffectual; then flinging

ing

ing off the maſk, he aboliſhed the office of tribune, as being only a ſcaffold to tyranny, whereof he had no further uſe.

As to *Pompey* and *Cæſar*, *Plutarch* tells us, that their union for pulling down the *nobles* (by their credit with the people) was the cauſe of the civil war, which ended in the tyranny of the latter; both of them in their conſulſhips having uſed all endeavours and occaſions for ſinking the authority of the *patricians*, and giving way to all encroachments of the people, wherein they expected beſt to find their own account.

From this deduction of popular encroachments in *Rome* the reader will eaſily judge, how much the balance was fallen upon that ſide. Indeed by this time the very foundation was removed, and it was a moral impoſſibility, that the republick could ſubſiſt any longer: for the *commons* having uſurped the offices of ſtate, and trampled on the ſenate, there was no government left but a *dominatio plebis*. Let us therefore examine how they proceeded in this conjuncture.

I think

I think it is an univerſal truth, that the people are much more dexterous at pulling down and ſetting up, than at preſerving what is fixed; and they are not fonder of ſeizing more than their own, than they are of delivering it up again to the *worſt bidder*, with their own into the bargain. For although in their corrupt notions of divine worſhip, they are apt to multiply their gods; yet their earthly devotion is ſeldom paid to above one idol at a time of their own creation, whoſe *oar* they pull with leſs murmuring and much more ſkill, than when they *ſhare the lading*, or even *hold the helm.*

The ſeveral provinces of the *Roman* empire were now governed by the great men of their ſtate; thoſe upon the frontiers with powerful armies either for conqueſt or defence. Theſe governors upon any deſigns of revenge or ambition were ſure to meet with a divided power at home, and therefore bent all their thoughts and applications to cloſe in with the people, who were now by many degrees the ſtronger party. Two of the greateſt ſpirits, that *Rome* ever produced, happened to live at the

the ſame time, and to be engaged in the ſame purſuit; and this at a conjuncture the moſt dangerous for ſuch a conteſt: theſe were *Pompey* and *Cæſar*, two ſtars of ſuch a magnitude, that their *conjunction* was as likely to be fatal, as their *oppoſition*.

The *tribunes* and people, having now ſubdued all competitors, began the laſt game of a prevalent populace, which is that of chuſing themſelves a *maſter*; while the nobles foreſaw, and uſed all endeavours left them to prevent it. The people at firſt made *Pompey* their admiral with full power over all the *Mediterranean*, ſoon after captain-general of all the *Roman* forces, and governor of *Aſia*. *Pompey* on the other ſide reſtored the office of *tribune*, which *Sylla* had put down; and in his conſulſhip procured a law for *examining into the miſcarriages of men in office or command for twenty years paſt*. Many other examples of *Pompey*'s popularity are left us on record, who was a perfect favourite of the people, and deſigned to be more; but his pretenſions grew ſtale for want of a timely opportunity of intro-

introducing them upon the ſtage. For *Cæſar*, with his legions in *Gaul*, was a perpetual check upon his deſigns; and in the arts of pleaſing the people did ſoon after get many lengths beyond him. For he tells us himſelf, that the ſenate by a bold effort having made ſome ſevere decrees againſt his proceedings, and againſt the tribunes, theſe all left the city, and went over to his party, and conſequently along with them the affections and intereſts of the people; which is further manifeſt from the accounts he gives us of the citizens in ſeveral towns mutinying againſt their commanders, and delivering both to his devotion. Beſides, *Cæſar*'s publick and avowed pretenſions for beginning the civil war were to reſtore the tribunes and the people oppreſſed (as he pretended) by the *nobles*.

This forced *Pompey*, againſt his inclinations, upon the neceſſity of changing ſides, for fear of being forſaken by both; and of cloſing in with the ſenate and chief magiſtrates, by whom he was choſen general againſt *Cæſar*.

Thus

Thus at length the *ſenate* (at leaſt the primitive part of them, the *nobles)* under *Pompey*, and the *commons* under *Cæſar*, came to a final deciſion of the long quarrels between them. For, I think, the ambition of private men did by no means begin or occaſion this war; though civil diſſentions never fail of introducing and ſpiriting the ambition of private men; who thus become indeed the great inſtruments for deciding of ſuch quarrels, and at laſt are ſure to ſeize on the prize. But no man, that ſees a flock of vultures hovering over two armies ready to engage, can juſtly charge the blood drawn in the battle to them, though the carcaſſes fall to their ſhare. For while the balance of power is equally held, the ambition of private men, whether orators or great commanders, gives neither danger nor fear, nor can poſſibly enſlave their country; but that once broken, the divided parties are forced to unite each to its head, under whoſe conduct or fortune one ſide is at firſt victorious, and at laſt both are ſlaves. And to put it paſt diſpute, that this entire ſubverſion of the *Roman* liberty and con-

ſtitution was altogether owing to thoſe meaſures, which had broke the balance between the *patricians* and *plebeians*, whereof the ambition of particular men was but an effect and conſequence, we need only conſider, that when the uncorrupted part of the ſenate had, by the death of *Cæſar*, made one great effort to reſtore their former ſtate and liberty, the ſucceſs did not anſwer their hopes, but that whole aſſembly was ſo ſunk in its authority, that thoſe patriots were forced to fly, and give way to the madneſs of the people, who by their own diſpoſitions, ſtirred up with the harrangues of their orators, were now wholly bent upon ſingle and deſpotick ſlavery. Elſe, how could ſuch a profligate as *Antony*, or a boy of eighteen, like *Octavius*, ever dare to dream of giving the law to ſuch an empire and people? wherein the latter ſucceeded, and entailed the vileſt tyranny, that heaven in its anger ever inflicted on a corrupt and poiſoned people. And this, with ſo little appearance at *Cæſar*'s death, that when *Cicero* wrote to *Brutus*, how he had prevailed by his credit with *Octavius* to promiſe him

(Brutus) pardon and ſecurity for his perſon, that great *Roman* received the notice with the utmoſt indignity, and returned *Cicero* an anſwer, yet upon record, full of the higheſt reſentment and contempt for ſuch an offer, and from ſuch a hand.

Here ended all ſhew or ſhadow of liberty in *Rome.* Here was the repoſitory of all the wiſe contentions and ſtruggles for power between the nobles and commons, lapped up ſafely in the boſom of a *Nero* and a *Caligula*, a *Tiberius*, and a *Domitian.*

Let us now ſee from this deduction of particular impeachments, and general diſſentions in *Greece* and *Rome*, what concluſions may naturally be formed for inſtruction of any other ſtate, that may haply upon many points labour under the like circumſtances.

CHAP. IV.

UPON the ſubject of *impeachments* we may obſerve, that the cuſtom of accuſing the *nobles* to the *people*, either by them-

themſelves, or their orators, (now ſtiled an *impeachment in the name of the commons*) hath been very antient both in *Greece* and *Rome*, as well as *Carthage*; and therefore may ſeem to be the inherent right of a free people, nay, perhaps it is really ſo: but then it is to be conſidered, firſt, that this cuſtom was peculiar to republiks, or ſuch ſtates, where the adminiſtration lay principally in the hands of the commons, and ever raged more or leſs, according to their encroachments upon abſolute power; having been always looked upon by the wiſeſt men and beſt authors of thoſe times, as an effect of licentiouſneſs, and not of liberty; a diſtinction, which no multitude either *repreſented* or *collective* hath been at any time very nice in obſerving. However, perhaps this cuſtom in a popular ſtate of impeaching particular men may ſeem to be nothing elſe, but the people's chuſing upon occaſion to exerciſe their own juriſdiction in perſon; as if a king of *England* ſhould ſit as chief juſtice in his court of *king's bench*; which, they ſay, in former times he ſometimes did. But in *Sparta*, which

was

was called a kingly government, though the people were perfectly free, yet becauſe the adminiſtration was in the two kings and the *ephori* with the aſſiſtance of the ſenate; we read of no impeachments by the people, nor was the proceſs againſt great men, either upon account of ambition or ill conduct, though it reached ſometimes to kings themſelves, ever formed that way, as I can recollect, but only paſſed through thoſe hands, where the adminiſtration lay. So likewiſe during the regal government in *Rome*, though it was inſtituted a mixed monarchy, and the people made great advances in power, yet I do not remember to have read of one impeachment from the commons againſt a patrician, until the conſular ſtate began, and the people had made great encroachments upon the adminiſtration.

Another thing to be conſidered is, that allowing this right of impeachment to be as inherent as they pleaſe, yet, if the commons have been perpetually miſtaken in the merits of the cauſes and the perſons, as well as in the conſequences of ſuch impeachments upon the peace of the ſtate,

we cannot conclude leſs, than that the commons in *Greece* and *Rome* (whatever they may be in other ſtates) were by no means qualified either as proſecutors or judges in ſuch matters; and therefore, that it would have been prudent, to have reſerved theſe privileges dormant, never to be produced but upon very great and urging occaſions, where the ſtate is in apparent danger, the univerſal body of the people in clamours againſt the adminiſtration, and no other remedy in view. But for a few popular orators or tribunes, upon the ſcore of *perſonal piques*; or *to employ the pride they conceive in ſeeing themſelves at the head of a party*; or *as a method for advancement*; or *moved by certain powerful arguments that could make* Demoſthenes *Phillippize:* for ſuch men, I ſay, when the ſtate would of itſelf gladly be quiet, and hath, beſides, affairs of the laſt importance upon the anvil, to *impeach* * Miltiades *after a great naval victory*,

* Though in other paſſages lord *Orford*'s character is ſuppoſed to be drawn under the name of *Themiſtocles*, yet he ſeems to be repreſented by *Miltiades* here; for *Themiſtocles* was not impeached at all. See p. 24.

for

for not purſuing the Perſian *fleet: to impeach* Ariſtides, *the perſon moſt verſed among them in the knowledge and practice of their laws, for a blind ſuſpicion of his acting in an arbitrary way (that is, as they expound it, not in concert with the people:) to impeach* Pericles, *after all his ſervices, for a few inconſiderable accounts*; or *to impeach* Phocion, *who had been guilty of no other crime but negotiating a treaty for the peace and ſecurity of his country:* what could the continuance of ſuch proceedings end in, but the utter diſcouragement of all virtuous actions and perſons, and conſequently in the ruin of a ſtate? therefore the hiſtorians of thoſe ages ſeldom fail to ſet this matter in all its lights, leaving us in the higheſt and moſt honourable *ideas* of thoſe perſons, who ſuffered by the perſecution of the people, together with the fatal conſequences they had, and how the perſecutors ſeldom failed to repent, when it was too late.

Theſe impeachments perpetually falling upon many of the beſt men both in *Greece* and *Rome*, are a cloud of witneſſes, and examples enough to diſcourage

men of virtue and abilities from engaging in the ſervice of the publick; and help on the other ſide to introduce the ambitious, the co'etous, the ſuperficial, and the ill-deſigning; who are as apt to be bold, and forward, and meddling, as the former are to be cautious, and modeſt, and reſerved. This was ſo well known in *Greece*, that an eagerneſs after employments in the ſtate was looked upon by wiſe men, as the worſt title a man could ſet up: and made *Plato* ſay, *That if all men were as good as they ought, the quarrel in a commonwealth would be, not as it is now, who* ſhould *be miniſters of ſtate, but who ſhould* not *be ſo.* And * *Socrates* is introduced by *Xenophon* ſeverely chiding a friend of his for not entering into the publick ſervice, when he was every way qualified for it: ſuch a backwardneſs there was at that time among good men to engage with an uſurping people, and a ſett of *pragmatical ambitious orators.* And † *Diodorus* tells us, that when the *petaliſm* was erected at *Syracuſe*,

* Lib. Memorab. † Lib. 11.

racuſe, in imitation of the ‡ *oſtraciſm* at *Athens*, it was ſo notoriouſly levelled againſt all who had either birth or merit to recommend them, that whoever poſſeſſed either, withdrew for fear, and would have no concern in publick affairs. So that the people themſelves were forced to abrogate it for fear of bringing all things into confuſion.

There is one thing more to be obſerved, wherein all the popular impeachments in *Greece* and *Rome* ſeem to have agreed; and that was, a notion they had of being concerned in *point of honour* to condemn whatever perſon they impeached, however frivolous the articles were, upon which they began, or however weak the ſurmiſes, whereon they were to proceed in their proofs. For, to conceive that

‡ *Oſtraciſm* was a kind of popular ſentence to baniſhment paſſed againſt men whoſe perſonal influence, from whatever cauſe, was thought to render them dangerous to the ſtate: the votes were given by writing the name of the perſon on a ſhell, by the *Greeks*, called ὄστρακον, and caſting the ſhell into an urn.

Petaliſm was a ſentence nearly of the ſame kind; and as *Oſtraciſm* was denominated from the ſhell, on which the name of the ſuſpected party was written, *Petaliſm* took its name from πέταλον, a leaf, which the *Syracuſians* uſed for the ſame purpoſe.

the

the body of the people could be miſtaken, was an indignity not to be imagined, till the conſequences had convinced them, when it was paſt remedy. And I look upon this as a fate, to which all popular accuſations are ſubject; though I ſhould think that the ſaying, *Vox populi vox Dei*, ought to be underſtood of the univerſal bent and current of a people, not of the *bare majority* of a few repreſentatives, which is often procured by *little arts*, and great induſtry and application; wherein thoſe, who engage in the purſuits of malice and revenge, are much more ſedulous that ſuch as would prevent them.

From what hath been deduced of the *diſſentions* in *Rome* between the two bodies of patricians and plebeians, ſeveral reflections may be made.

Firſt, That when the balance of power is duly fixed in a ſtate, nothing is more dangerous or unwiſe, than to give way to the *firſt ſteps* of popular encroachments; which is uſually done either in hopes of procuring eaſe and quiet from ſome vexatious clamour, or elſe *made merchandize, and merely bought and ſold*. This is breaking

ing into a conſtitution to ſerve a preſent expedient, or ſupply a preſent exigency: the remedy of an empirick, to ſtifle the preſent pain, but with certain proſpect of ſudden and terrible returns. When a child grows eaſy and content by being humoured; and when a lover becomes ſatisfied by ſmall compliances, without further purſuits; then expect to find popular aſſemblies content with ſmall conceſſions. If there could one ſingle example be brought from the whole compaſs of hiſtory, of any one popular aſſembly, who, after beginning to contend for power, ever ſat down quietly with a certain ſhare: or if one inſtance could be produced of a popular aſſembly, that ever knew, or propoſed, or declared what ſhare of power was their due; then might there be ſome hopes, that it were a matter to be adjuſted by reaſonings, by conferences, or debates: but ſince all that is manifeſtly otherwiſe, I ſee no other courſe to be taken in a ſettled ſtate, than a ſteady conſtant reſolution in thoſe, to whom the reſt of the balance is entruſted, never to give way ſo far to popular clamours, as to make the leaſt breach in

in the conſtitution, through which a million of abuſes and encroachments will certainly in time force their way.

Again, from this deduction it will not be difficult to gather and aſſign certain marks of popular encroachments; by obſerving of which, thoſe who hold the balance in a ſtate may judge of the degrees, and, by early remedies and application, put a ſtop to the fatal conſequences that would otherwiſe enſue. What thoſe marks are, hath been at large deduced, and need not be here repeated.

Another conſequence is this: that (with all reſpect for popular aſſemblies be it ſpoke) it is hard to recollect one folly, infirmity, or vice, to which a ſingle man is ſubjected, and from which a body of commons, either collective or repreſented, can be wholly exempt. For, beſides that they are compoſed of men with all their infirmities about them, they have alſo the ill fortune to be generally led and influenced by the very worſt among themſelves, I mean, *popular orators*, *tribunes*, or, as they are now ſtyled, *great ſpeakers*, *leading men*, and the like. From whence it comes

comes to paſs, that in their reſults we have ſometimes found the ſame ſpirit of cruelty and revenge, of malice and pride, the ſame blindneſs and obſtinacy and unſteadineſs, the ſame ungovernable rage and anger, the ſame injuſtice, ſophiſtry and fraud, that ever lodged in the breaſt of any individual.

Again, in all free ſtates the evil to be avoided is *tyranny*, that is to ſay, the *ſumma imperii* or unlimited power ſolely in the hands of the *one*, the *few*, or the *many*. Now, we have ſhewn, that although moſt revolutions of government in *Greece* and *Rome* began with the tyranny of the people, yet they generally concluded in that of a ſingle perſon; ſo that an uſurping populace is its own *dupe*; a meer underworker, and a purchaſer in truſt for ſome ſingle tyrant, whoſe ſtate and power they advance to their own ruin, with as blind an inſtinct, as thoſe worms that die with weaving magnificent habits for beings of a ſuperior nature to their own.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

SOME reflections upon the late publick proceedings among us, and that variety of factions into which we are ſtill ſo intricately engaged, gave occaſion to this diſcourſe. I am not conſcious, that I have forced one example, or put it into any other light than it appeared to me long before I had thought of producing it.

I cannot conclude without adding ſome particular remarks upon the preſent poſture of affairs and diſpoſitions in this kingdom.

The fate of empire is grown a commonplace: that all forms of government having been inſtituted by men, muſt be mortal like their authors, and have their periods of duration limited as well as thoſe of private perſons. This is a truth of vulgar knowledge and obſervation: but there are few, who turn their thoughts to examine, how thoſe diſeaſes in a ſtate are bred, that haſten its end; which would however be a very uſeful enquiry. For though we cannot prolong the period of a commonwealth beyond the decree of heaven,

ven, or the date of its nature, any more than human life beyond the ſtrength of the ſeminal virtue; yet we may manage a ſickly conſtitution; and preſerve a ſtrong one; we may watch and prevent accidents; we may turn off a great blow from without, and purge away an ill humour that is lurking within: and by theſe, and other ſuch methods, render a ſtate long-lived, though not immortal. Yet ſome phyſicians have thought, that if it were practicable to keep the ſeveral humours of the body in an exact equal balance of each with its oppoſite, it might be immortal, and ſo perhaps would a political body, if the balance of power could be always held exactly even. But, I doubt, this is as impoſſible in practice as the other.

It hath an appearance of fatality, and that the period of a ſtate approacheth, when a concurrence of many circumſtances, both within and without, unite towards its ruin: while the whole body of the people are either ſtupidly negligent, or elſe giving in with all their might to thoſe very practices, that are working their deſtruction. To ſee whole bodies of men break-

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ing a conſtitution by the very ſame errors, that ſo many have been broke before: to obſerve oppoſite parties, who can agree in nothing elſe, yet firmly united in ſuch meaſures, as muſt certainly ruin their country: in ſhort, to be encompaſſed with the greateſt dangers from without, to be torn by many virulent factions within; then to be ſecure and ſenſeleſs under all this, and to make it the very leaſt of our concern; theſe, and ſome others that might be named, appear to me to be the moſt likely ſymptoms in a ſtate of a *ſickneſs unto death.*

Quod procul a nobis flectat fortuna gubernans:
Et ratio potius, quam res perſuadeat ipſa.
LUCRET.

There are ſome conjunctures, wherein the death or diſſolution of government is more lamentable in its conſequences, than it would be in others. And, I think, a ſtate can never arrive to its period in a more deplorable *criſis*, than at a time when ſome *prince in the neighbourhood*, of vaſt

vaſt power and ambition, lies hovering like a vulture to devour, or, at leaſt, diſmember its dying carcaſs; by which means it becomes only a province or acquiſition to ſome mighty monarchy, without hopes of a reſurrection.

I know very well, there is a ſett of ſanguine tempers, who deride and ridicule, in the number of fopperies, all ſuch apprehenſions as theſe. They have it ready in their mouths, that the people of *England* are of a genius and temper never to admit ſlavery among them; and they are furniſhed with a great many commonplaces upon that ſubject. But it ſeems to me, that ſuch diſcourſes do reaſon upon ſhort views, and a very moderate compaſs of thought. For, I think, it a great error to count upon the genius of a nation as a ſtanding argument in all ages, ſince there is hardly a ſpot of ground in *Europe*, where the inhabitants have not frequently and entirely changed their temper and genius. Neither can I ſee any reaſon, why the genius of a nation ſhould be more fixed in the point of government, than in their morals, their learning, their

religion, their common humour and converſation, their diet and their complection; which do all notoriouſly vary almoſt in every age, and may every one of them have great effects upon mens notions of government.

Since the *Norman* conqueſt the balance of power in *England* hath often varied, and ſometimes been wholly overturned; the part which the commons had in it, *(that moſt diſputed point) in its original, progreſs, and extent*, was, by their own confeſſions, but a very inconſiderable ſhare. Generally ſpeaking, they have been gaining ever ſince, though with frequent interruptions and ſlow progreſs. The aboliſhing of *villanage*, together with the cuſtom introduced (or permitted) among the nobles of ſelling their lands in the reign of *Henry* the Seventh, was a mighty addition to the power of the commons: yet I think a much greater happened in the time of his ſucceſſor, at the diſſolution of the abbeys; for this turned the *clergy* wholly out of the ſcale, who had ſo long filled it; and placed the *commons* in their ſtead; who in a few years

years became poſſeſſed of vaſt quantities of thoſe and other lands, by grant or purchaſe. About the middle of queen *Elizabeth*'s reign, I take the power between the nobles and the commons to have been in more equal balance, than it was ever before or ſince. But then or ſoon after aroſe a faction in *England*, which under the name of *puritan* began to grow popular by molding up their new ſchemes of religion with republican principles in government; and, gaining upon the *prerogative* as well as the *nobles*, under ſeveral denominations, for the ſpace of about ſixty years, did at laſt overthrow the conſtitution, and, according to the uſual courſe of ſuch revolutions, did introduce a tyranny, firſt of the people, and then of a ſingle perſon.

In a ſhort time after, the old government was revived. But the progreſs of affairs for almoſt thirty years, under the reigns of two weak princes †, is a ſubject of a very different nature: when the balance was in danger to be overturned by

† *Charles* II. and *James* II.

the hands that held it, which was at laſt very ſeaſonably prevented by the late revolution. However, as it is the talent of human nature to run from one extreme to another, ſo in a very few years we have made mighty leaps from prerogative heighths into the depths of popularity, and, I doubt, to the very laſt degree that our conſtitution will bear. It were to be wiſhed, that the moſt auguſt aſſembly of the commons would pleaſe to form a *pandect* of their own power and privileges, to be confirmed by the entire legiſlative authority, and that in as ſolemn a manner (if they pleaſe) as the *magna charta*. But to fix one foot of their compaſs whereever they think fit, and extend the other to ſuch terrible lengths, without deſcribing any circumference at all, is to leave us and themſelves in a very uncertain ſtate, and in a ſort of *rotation*, that * the author of the *Oceana* never dreamed on. I believe the

* Mr. *James Harrington*, ſometime in the ſervice of king *Charles* I. after whoſe death he drew up and printed a form of popular government, entitled, *The Commonwealth of Oceana*: he endeavoured likewiſe to promote this ſcheme by publick diſcourſes at a nightly meeting of ſeveral curious gentlemen in *New Palace-Yard*, *Weſtminſter*. This club was called

the moſt hardy tribune will not venture to affirm at preſent, that any juſt fears of encroachment are given us from the regal power, or the *few*: and, is it then impoſſible to err on the other ſide? How far muſt we proceed, or where ſhall we ſtop? *The raging of the ſea*, and *the madneſs of the people* are put together in holy writ; and it is God alone who can ſay to either, *Hitherto ſhalt thou paſs, and no further.*

The balance of power in a limited ſtate is of ſuch abſolute neceſſity, that *Cromwell* himſelf, before he had perfectly confirmed his tyranny, having ſome occaſions for the appearance of a parliament, was forced to create and erect an entire new houſe of lords (ſuch as it was) for a counterpoiſe to the commons. And indeed, conſidering the vileneſs of the clay, I have ſometimes wondered, that no tribune of that age durſt ever venture to aſk the *potter*, *What doſt thou make?* But it was then about the laſt act of a popular

called the *Rota*; and Mr. *Henry Nevil*, one of its members, propoſed to the then houſe of commons, that a third part of the ſenate ſhould *rote* out by ballot every year, and be incapable of being elected again for three years to come.

uſurpation, and *fate* or *Cromwell* had already prepared them for that of a ſingle perſon.

I have been often amazed at the rude, paſſionate, and miſtaken reſults, which have at certain times fallen from great aſſemblies, both ancient and modern, and of other countries as well as our own. This gave me the opinion, I mentioned a while ago; that publick conventions are liable to all the infirmities, follies, and vices of private men. To which, if there be any exception, it muſt be of ſuch aſſemblies, who act by *univerſal concert, upon publick principles, and for publick ends*; ſuch as proceed upon debates without *unbecoming warmths*, or *influence from particular leaders and inflamers*; ſuch whoſe members inſtead *of canvaſſing to procure majorities for their private opinions, are ready to comply with general ſober reſults, though contrary to their own ſentiments.* Whatever aſſemblies act by theſe and other methods of the like nature, muſt be allowed to be exempt from ſeveral imperfections, to which particular men are ſubjected. But I think the ſource of

of moſt miſtakes and miſcarriages in matters debated by publick aſſemblies, ariſeth from the influence of private perſons upon great numbers, ſtyled in common phraſe, *leading men and parties.* And therefore when we ſometimes meet a *few words* put together, which is called the *vote* or *reſolution* of an aſſembly, and which we cannot poſſibly reconcile to *prudence*, or *publick good*, it is moſt charitable to conjecture, that ſuch a vote has been conceived, and born, and bred in a private brain, afterwards raiſed and ſupported by an obſequious party, and then with uſual methods confirmed by an *artificial* majority. For, let us ſuppoſe five hundred men, mixed in point of ſenſe and honeſty, as uſually aſſemblies are; and let us ſuppoſe theſe men propoſing, debating, reſolving, voting, according to the meer natural motions of their own little or much reaſon and underſtanding; I do allow, that abundance of indigeſted and abortive, many pernicious and fooliſh overtures would ariſe, and float a few minutes; but then they would die and diſappear. Becauſe, this muſt be ſaid in behalf of human-

kind, that common ſenſe and plain reaſon, while men are diſengaged from acquired opinions, will ever have ſome general influence upon their minds; whereas the ſpecies of folly and vice are infinite, and ſo different in every individual, that they could never procure a majority, if other corruptions did not enter to pervert mens underſtandings, and miſguide their wills.

To deſcribe how parties are bred in an aſſembly, would be a work too difficult at preſent, and perhaps not altogether ſafe. *Periculoſæ plenum opus aleæ.* Whether thoſe, who are leaders, uſually arrive at that ſtation more by a ſort of inſtinct or ſecret compoſition of their nature, or influence of the ſtars, than by the poſſeſſion of any great abilities, may be a point of much diſpute: but when the leader is once fixed, there will never fail to be followers. And man is ſo apt to *imitate*, ſo much of the nature of *ſheep*, *(imitatores, ſervum pecus)* that whoever is ſo bold to give the firſt *great leap over the heads of thoſe about him*, though he be the worſt of the flock, ſhall be quickly followed by the reſt. Beſides, when parties

parties are once formed, the ſtragglers look ſo ridiculous, and become ſo inſignificant, that they have no other way, but to run into the herd, which at leaſt will hide and protect them; and were to be much conſidered, requires only to be very violent.

But their is one circumſtance with relation to parties, which I take to be of all others moſt pernicious in a ſtate; and I would be glad any partizan would help me to a tolerable reaſon, that becauſe *Clodius* and *Curio* happen to agree with me in a few ſingular notions, I muſt therefore blindly follow them in all: or, to ſtate it at beſt, that becauſe *Bibulus* the *party-man* is perſuaded, that *Clodius* and *Curio* do really propoſe the good of their country as their chief end; therefore *Bibulus* ſhall be wholly guided and governed by them in the means and meaſures towards it. Is it enough for *Bibulus*, and the reſt of the herd, to ſay without further examining, *I am of the ſide with* Clodius, *or I vote with* Curio? are theſe proper methods to form and make up what they think fit to call the *united wiſdom of the*

the nation? Is it not poſſible, that upon ſome occaſion *Clodius* may be bold and inſolent, borne away by his paſſion, malicious, and revengeful? That *Curio* may be corrupt, and expoſe to ſale his tongue, or his pen? I conceive it far below the dignity both of human nature, and human reaſon to be engaged in any party, the moſt plauſible ſoever, upon ſuch ſervile conditions.

This influence of *one* upon many, which ſeems to be as great in a people *repreſented*, as it was of old in the commons *collective*, together with the conſequences it hath had upon the legiſlature, hath given me frequent occaſion to reflect upon what *Diodorus* tells us of one *Charondas*, a lawgiver to the *Sybarites*, an antient people of *Italy*, who was ſo averſe from all innovation, eſpecially when it was to proceed from particular perſons, (and I ſuppoſe, that he might put it out of the power of men fond of their own notions to diſturb the conſtitution at their pleaſures, by advancing private ſchemes) that he provided a ſtatute, that whoever propoſed any alteration to be made, ſhould

ſtep

ſtep out and do it with a rope about his neck: if the matter propoſed were generally approved, then it ſhould paſs into a law; if it went into the negative, the propoſer to be immediately *hanged*. Great miniſters may talk of what projects they pleaſe; but I am deceived, if a more effectual one could ever be found for *taking off* (as the preſent phraſe is) thoſe hot, unquiet ſpirits, who diſturb aſſemblies, and obſtruct publick affairs, by gratifying their pride, their malace, their ambition, or their avarice.

Thoſe, who in a late reign began the diſtinction between the *perſonal* and *politick* capacity, ſeem to have had reaſon, if they judged of princes by themſelves; for, I think, there is hardly to be found through all nature a greater difference between two things, than there is between a repreſenting commoner in the function of his publick calling, and the ſame perſon when he acts in the common offices of life. Here he allows himſelf to be upon a level with the reſt of mortals: here he follows his own reaſon, and his own way; and rather affects a ſingularity in his actions

ons and thoughts, then ſervilely to copy either from the wiſeſt of his neighbours. In ſhort, here his folly, and his wiſdom, his reaſon and his paſſions are all of his own growth, not the eccho or infuſion of other men. But when he is got near the walls of his aſſembly, he aſſumes and effects an entire ſett of very different airs; he conceives himſelf a being of a ſuperior nature to thoſe *without*, and acting in a ſphere, where the vulgar methods for the conduct of human life can be of no uſe. He is liſted in a party, where he neither knows the temper, nor deſigns, nor perhaps the perſon of his leader; but whoſe opinions he follows and maintains with a zeal and faith as violent, as a young ſcholar does thoſe of a philoſopher, whoſe ſect he is taught to profeſs. He hath neither opinions, nor thoughts, nor actions, nor talk, that he can call his own, but all conveyed to him by his leader, as wind is through an organ. The nouriſhment he receives, hath been not only *chewed*, but *digeſted*, before it comes into his mouth. Thus inſtructed, he follows the *party* right or wrong through all its ſentiments,

ments, and acquires a courage and ſtiffneſs of opinion not at all congenial with him.

This encourages me to hope, that during the preſent lucid interval, the members retired to their homes may ſuſpend a while their *acquired* complexions, and taught by the calmneſs of the ſcene and the ſeaſon, reaſſume the *native* ſedateneſs of their temper. If this ſhould be ſo, it would be wiſe in them, as individual and private mortals, to look back a little upon the ſtorms they have *raiſed*, as well as thoſe they have *eſcaped*. To reflect, that they have been authors of a new and wonderful thing in *England*, which is, for a houſe of commons to loſe the univerſal favour of the numbers they repreſent: to obſerve, how thoſe, whom they thought fit to perſecute for righteouſneſs ſake, have been openly careſſed by the people; and to remember how themſelves ſate in fear of their perſons from popular rage. Now, if they would know the ſecret of all this unprecedented proceeding in their *maſters*, they muſt not impute it to their freedom in debate, or declaring their opinions, but to that

that unparliamentary abuſe of *ſetting individuals upon their ſhoulders*, who were hated by God and man. For, it ſeems the maſs of the people, in ſuch conjunctures as this, have opened their eyes, and will not endure to be governed by *Clodius* and *Curio*, at the head of their *Myrmidons*, though theſe be ever ſo numerous, and compoſed of their own repreſentatives.

This averſion of the people againſt the late proceedings of the commons is an accident, that, if it laſt a while, might be improved to good uſes for ſetting the balance of power a little more upon an equality, than their late meaſures ſeem to promiſe or admit. This accident may be imputed to two cauſes: the firſt is an univerſal fear and apprehenſion of the greatneſs and power of *France*, whereof the people in general ſeem to be very much and juſtly poſſeſſed, and therefore cannot but reſent to ſee it, in ſo critical a juncture, wholly laid aſide by their *miniſters*, the commons. The other cauſe is a great love and ſenſe of gratitude in the people towards their preſent *king*, grounded upon

on a long opinion and experience of his merit, as well as conceſſions to all their reaſonable deſires; ſo that it is for ſome time they have begun to ſay, and to fetch inſtances, where he hath in many things been hardly uſed. How long theſe humours may laſt, (for paſſions are momentary, and eſpecially thoſe of a multitude) or what conſequences they may produce, a little time will diſcover. But whenever it comes to paſs, that a popular aſſembly, free from ſuch obſtructions, and already poſſeſſed of more power, than an equal balance will allow, ſhall continue to think they have not enough, but by cramping the hand that holds the balance, and by *impeachments* or *diſſentions* with the nobles, endeavour ſtill for more; I cannot poſſibly ſee in the common courſe of things, how the ſame cauſes can produce different effects and conſequences among us, from what they did in *Greece* and *Rome*.

THE

THE SENTIMENTS OF A *Church of England Man*

With reſpect to

RELIGION and GOVERNMENT.

Written in the Year 1708. *

WHOEVER hath examined the conduct and proceedings of both *parties* for ſome years paſt, whether in or out of power, cannot well conceive it poſſible to go far towards the extremes of either, without offering ſome violence to his integrity or underſtanding. A wife and a good man may indeed be ſometimes induced to comply with a number, whoſe opinion he generally approves, though it

* This appears to be an apology for the Tories, and a juſtification of them againſt the miſrepreſentations of the Whigs, who were then in the miniſtry, and uſed every artifice to perpetuate their power. Mr. *Harley*, afterwards lord *Oxford*, had by the influence of the duke of *Marlborough* and lord-treaſurer *Godolphin*, been lately removed from his poſt of principal ſecretary of ſtate; and Mr. *St. John*, afterwards lord *Bolingbroke*, reſigned his place of ſecretary at war, and ſir *Simon Harcourt* that of attorney-general.

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be perhaps againſt his own. But this liberty ſhould be made uſe of upon very few occaſions, and thoſe of ſmall importance, and then only with a view of bringing over his own ſide another time *to* ſomething of greater and more publick moment. But to ſacrifice the innocency of a friend, the good of our country, or our own conſcience, to the humour, or paſſion, or intereſt of a party, plainly ſhews, that either our heads or our hearts are not as they ſhould be: yet this very practice is the very fundamental law of each faction among us, as may be obvious to any, who will impartially and without engagement be at the pains to examine their actions, which however is not ſo eaſy a taſk: for it ſeems a principle in human nature, to incline one way more than another, even in matters where we are wholly unconcerned. And it is a common obſervation, that in reading a hiſtory of facts done a thouſand years ago, or ſtanding by at play among thoſe, who are perfect ſtrangers to us, we are apt to find our hopes and wiſhes engaged on a ſudden in favour of one ſide more than

another. No wonder then that we are all ſo ready to intereſt ourſelves in the courſe of publick affairs, where the moſt inconſiderable have ſome *real* ſhare, and by the wonderful importance which every man is of to himſelf, a very great *imaginary* one.

And indeed, when the two parties, that divide the whole commonwealth, come once to a rupture, without any hopes left of forming a third with better principles to balance the others, it ſeems every man's duty to chuſe one of the two ſides, though he cannot entirely approve of either; and all pretences to neutrality are juſtly exploded by both, being too ſtale and obvious, only intending the ſafety and eaſe of a few individuals, while the publick is embroiled. This was the opinion and practice of the latter *Cato*, whom I eſteem to have been the wiſeſt and beſt of all the *Romans* *. But before things proceed to open violence, the trueſt ſervice a private man may hope to do his country, is by unbiaſſing his mind as much as poſ-

* One of the ſextumvirate in *Gulliver*. Part III. Chap. VII.

ſible

ſible, and then endeavouring to moderate between the rival powers, which muſt needs be owned a fair proceeding with the world, becauſe it is of all others the leaſt conſiſtent with the common deſign of making a fortune by the *merit* of an *opinion*.

I have gone as far as I am able in qualifying myſelf to be ſuch a moderator: I believe I am no *bigot* in religion, and I am ſure I am none in government. I converſe in full freedom with many conſiderable men of both parties; and if not in equal number, it is purely accidental and perſonal, as happening to be near the court, and to have made acquaintance there, more under one miniſtry than another. Then, I am not under the neceſſity of declaring my ſelf by the proſpect of an employment. And laſtly, if all this be not ſufficient, I induſtriouſly conceal my name, which wholly exempts me from any hopes and fears in delivering my opinion.

In conſequence of this free uſe of my reaſon, I cannot poſſibly think ſo well or ſo ill of either party, as they would endea-

vour to purſuade the world of each other, and of themſelves. For inſtance; I do not charge it upon the body of the *whigs* or the *tories*, that their ſeveral principles lead them to introduce preſbytery, and the religion of the church of *Rome*, or a commonwealth, and arbitrary power. For why ſhould any party be accuſed of a principle, which they ſolemnly diſown and proteſt againſt? But, to this they have a mutual anſwer ready: they both aſſure us, that their adverſaries are not to be believed; that they diſown their principles out of fear, which are manifeſt enough, when we examine their practices. To prove this they will produce inſtances, on one ſide, either of avowed preſbyterians, or perſons of libertine and atheiſtical tenets, and on the other of profeſſed papiſts, or ſuch as are openly in the intereſt of the abdicated family. Now it is very natural for all ſubordinate ſects and denominations in a ſtate to ſide with ſome general party, and to chuſe that, which they find to agree with themſelves in ſome general principle. Thus at the *reſtoration* the preſbyterians, anabaptiſts, independents,

dents, and other ſects, did all, with very good reaſon, unite and ſolder up their ſeveral ſchemes to join againſt the *church*, who, without regard to their diſtinctions, treated them all as equal adverſaries. Thus, our preſent diſſenters do very naturally cloſe in with the whigs, who profeſs *moderation*, declare they abhor all thoughts of *perſecution*, and think it hard that thoſe, who differ only in a few *ceremonies* and *ſpeculations*, ſhould be denied the privilege and profit of ſerving their country in the higheſt employments of ſtate. Thus, the atheiſt, libertines, deſpiſers of religion and revelation in general, that is to ſay, all thoſe who uſually paſs under the name of *Free-thinkers*, do properly join with the ſame body; becauſe *they* likewiſe preach up *moderation*, and are not ſo over-nice to diſtinguiſh between an unlimited liberty of conſcience, and an unlimited freedom of opinion. Then, on the other ſide, the profeſſed firmneſs of the *tories* for epiſcopacy, as an apoſtolical inſtitution: their averſion to thoſe ſects, who lie under the reproach of having once deſtroyed their conſtitution, and who,

they imagine, by too indiſcreet a zeal for reformation have defaced the primitive model of the church: next, their veneration for monarchical government in the common courſe of ſucceſſion, and their hatred to republican ſchemes: theſe, I ſay, are principles which not only the non-juring zealots profeſs, but even papiſts themſelves fall readily in with. And every extreme here mentioned, flings a general ſcandal upon the whole body it pretends to adhere to.

But ſurely no man whatſoever ought in juſtice or good manners to be charged with principles he actually diſowns, unleſs his practices do openly, and without the leaſt room for doubt, contradict his profeſſion: not upon ſmall ſurmiſes, or becauſe he has the misfortune to have ill men ſometimes agree with him in a few general ſentiments. However, though the extremes of *whig* and *tory* ſeem, with little juſtice, to have drawn religion into their controverſies, wherein they have ſmall concern, yet they both have borrowed one leading principle from the abuſe of it, which is, to have built their ſeveral ſyſtems

ſyſtems of political faith, not upon enquiries after truth, but upon oppoſition to each other, upon injurious appellations, charging their adverſaries with horrid opinions, and then reproaching them for the want of charity; *et neuter falſo.*

In order to remove theſe prejudices, I have thought nothing could be more effectual, than to deſcribe the ſentiments of a *church of England man* with reſpect to *religion* and *government.* This I ſhall endeavour to do in ſuch a *manner*, as may not be liable to the leaſt objection from either party, and which I am confident would be aſſented to by great numbers in both, if they were not miſled to thoſe mutual miſrepreſentations by ſuch motives, as they would be aſhamed to own.

I ſhall begin with *religion.*

And here, though it makes an odd ſound, yet it is neceſſary to ſay, that whoever profeſſeth himſelf a member of the church of *England*, ought to believe a God, and his providence, together with revealed religion, and the divinity of *Chriſt.* For beſides thoſe many thouſands,

ſands, who (to ſpeak in the phraſe of divines) do practically deny all this by the immorality of their lives, there is no ſmall number, who in their converſation and writings directly, or by conſequence, endeavour to overthrow it; yet all theſe place themſelves in the liſt of the national church, though at the ſame time (as it is highly reaſonable) they are great ſticklers for liberty of conſcience.

To enter upon particulars: a *church of England man* has a true veneration for the ſcheme eſtabliſhed among us of eccleſiaſtick government; and though he will not determine whether epiſcopacy be of divine right, he is ſure it is moſt agreeable to primitive inſtitution, fitteſt of all others for preſerving order and purity, and under its preſent regulations beſt calculated for our civil ſtate: he ſhould therefore think the aboliſhment of that order among us would prove a mighty ſcandal and corruption to our faith, and manifeſtly dangerous to our monarchy; nay, he would defend it by arms againſt all the powers on earth, except our own legiſlature; in which caſe he would ſubmit

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as to a general calamity, a dearth, or a peſtilence.

As to rites and ceremonies, and forms of prayer; he allows there might be ſome uſeful alterations, and more, which in the proſpect of uniting chriſtians might be very ſupportable, as things declared in their own nature indifferent; to which he therefore would readily comply, if the *clergy*, or (though this be not ſo fair a method) if the *legiſlature* ſhould direct: yet at the ſame time he cannot altogether blame the former for their unwillingneſs to conſent to any alteration, which, beſide the trouble, and perhaps diſgrace, would certainly never produce the good effects intended by it. The only condition, that could make it prudent and juſt for the clergy to comply in altering the ceremonial, or any other indifferent part, would be a firm reſolution in the legiſlature to interpoſe, by ſome ſtrict and effectual laws, to prevent the riſing and ſpreading of new ſects, how plauſible ſoever, for the future; elſe there muſt never be an end: and it would be to act like a man, who ſhould pull down and change the

the ornaments of his houſe in compliance to every one, who was diſpoſed to find fault as he paſſed by; which, beſides the perpetual trouble and expence, would very much damage, and perhaps in time deſtroy the building. Sects in a ſtate ſeem only tolerated with any reaſon, becauſe they are already ſpread; and becauſe it would not be agreeable with ſo mild a government, or ſo pure a religion as ours, to uſe violent methods againſt great numbers of *miſtaken* people, while they do not manifeſtly endanger the conſtitution of either. But the greateſt advocates for general liberty of conſcience will allow, that they ought to be checked in their beginnings, if they will allow them to be an evil at all, or, which is the ſame thing, if they will only grant, it were better for the peace of the ſtate, that there ſhould be none. But while the clergy conſider the natural temper of mankind in general, or of our own country in particular, what aſſurances can they have, that any compliances they ſhall make, will remove the evil of diſſention, while the liberty ſtill continues of profeſſing whatever new opinions

pinion we pleaſe? Or how can it be imagined, that the body of diſſenting teachers, who muſt be all undone by ſuch a revolution, will not caſt about for ſome new objections to with-hold their flocks, and draw in freſh proſelytes by ſome further innovations or refinements.

Upon theſe reaſons he is for tolerating ſuch different forms in religious worſhip as are already admitted, but by no means for leaving it in the power of thoſe, who are tolerated, to advance their own models upon the ruin of what is already eſtabliſhed; which it is natural for all ſects to deſire, and which they cannot be juſtified by any conſiſtent principles if they do not endeavour; and yet, which they cannot ſucceed in without the utmoſt danger to the publick peace.

To prevent theſe inconveniences, he thinks it highly juſt, that all rewards of truſt, profit, or dignity, which the ſtate leaves in the diſpoſal of the adminiſtration, ſhould be given only to thoſe, whoſe principles direct them to preſerve the conſtitution in all its parts. In the late affair of *occaſional conformity*, the general argument

ment of thoſe who were againſt it, was not to deny it an evil in itſelf, but that the remedy propoſed was violent, untimely, and improper, which is the biſhop of *Saliſbury*'s * opinion in the ſpeech he made and publiſhed againſt the bill: but however juſt their fears or complaints might have been upon that ſcore, he thinks it a little too groſs and precipitate to employ their writers already in arguments for repealing the ſacramental teſt, upon no wiſer a maxim, than that no man ſhould, on the account of conſcience, be deprived the liberty of ſerving his country; a topick which may be equally applied to admit *Papiſts*, *Atheiſts*, *Mahometans*, *Heathens* and *Jews*. If the church wants members of its own to employ in the ſervice of the publick, or be ſo unhappily contrived, as to exclude from its communion ſuch perſons, who are likelieſt to have great abilities, it is time it ſhould be altered and reduced into ſome more perfect, or at leaſt more popular form: but in the mean while it is not altogether

* Dr. Burnet.

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improbable, that when thoſe, who diſlike the conſtitution, are ſo very zealous in their offers for the ſervice of their country, they are not wholly unmindful of their party, or of themſelves.

The *Dutch*, whoſe practice is ſo often quoted to prove and celebrate the great advantages of a general liberty of conſcience, have yet a national religion profeſſed by all who bear office among them: but why ſhould they be a precedent for us either in religion or government? our country differs from theirs, as well in ſituation, ſoil, and productions of nature, as in the genius and complection of inhabitants. They are a commonwealth founded on a ſudden, by a deſperate attempt in a deſperate condition, not formed or digeſted into a regular ſyſtem by mature thought and reaſon, but huddled up under the preſſure of ſudden exigencies; calculated for no long duration, and hitherto ſubſiſting by accident in the midſt of contending powers, who cannot yet agree about ſharing it amongſt them. Theſe difficulties do indeed preſerve them from any great corruptions, which their crazy

crazy conſtitution would extremely ſubject them to in a long peace. That confluence of people in a perſecuting age to a place of refuge neareſt at hand, put them upon the neceſſity of trade, to which they wiſely gave all eaſe and encouragement: and if we could think fit to imitate them in this laſt particular, there would need no more to invite foreigners among us; who ſeem to think no farther than how to ſecure their property and conſcience, without projecting any ſhare in that government which gives them protection, or calling it *perſecution*, if it be denied them. But, I ſpeak it for the honour of our adminiſtration, that although our ſects are not ſo numerous as thoſe in *Holland*, which I preſume is not our *fault*, and I hope is not our *misfortune*, we much excel them and all *Chriſtendom* beſides in our indulgence to tender conſciences †. One ſingle compliance with the national form of receiving the ſacrament, is all we require to qualify any ſectary among us for the greateſt employ-

† When this was written, there was no law againſt occaſional conformity.

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ments in the ſtate, after which he is at liberty to rejoin his own aſſemblies for the reſt of his life. Beſides, I will ſuppoſe any of the numerous ſects in *Holland* to have ſo far prevailed, as to have raiſed a civil war, deſtroyed their government and religion, and put their *adminiſtrators* to death; after which I will ſuppoſe the people to have recovered all again, and to have ſettled on their old foundation. Then I would put a query, whether that ſect, which was the unhappy inſtrument of all this confuſion, could reaſonably expect to be entruſted for the future with the greateſt employments, or indeed to be hardly tolerated among them?

To go on with the ſentiments of a *church of England man*: he does not ſee how that mighty paſſion for the church, which ſome men pretend, can well conſiſt with thoſe indignities and that contempt they beſtow on the perſons of the clergy. It is a ſtrange mark whereby to diſtinguiſh *high-church men*, that they are ſuch, who imagine the clergy can never be too *low*. He thinks the maxim theſe

gentlemen are ſo fond of, that they are for an humble clergy, is a very good one: and ſo is he, and for an humble laity too, ſince humility is a virtue, that perhaps equally befits and adorns every ſtation of life.

But then, if the ſcribblers on the other ſide freely ſpeak the ſentiments of their party, a divine of the church of *England* cannot look for much better quarter from thence. You ſhall obſerve nothing more frequent in their weekly papers, than a way of affecting to confound the terms of *clergy* and *high-church*, of applying both indifferently, and then loading the latter with all the calumny they can invent. They will tell you, they honour a clergyman; but talk at the ſame time, as if there were not three in the kingdom, who could fall in with their definition. After the like manner they inſult the *univerſities* as poiſoned fountains, and corrupters of youth.

Now it ſeems clear to me, that the *whigs* might eaſily have procured [illegible] maintained a majority among[illegible] and perhaps in the uni[illegible]

had not too much encouraged or connived at this intemperance of ſpeech and virulence of pen, in the worſt and moſt proſtitute of their party; among whom there hath been, for ſome years paſt, ſuch a perpetual clamour againſt the ambition, the implacable temper, and the covetouſneſs of the *prieſthood*: ſuch a cant of *high-church*, and perſecution, and being *prieſt-ridden*, ſo many reproaches about *narrow principles*, or *terms of communion*: then ſuch ſcandalous reflections on the *univerſities*, for infecting the youth of the nation with arbitrary and *jacobite* principles, that it was natural for thoſe, who had the care of religion and education, to apprehend ſome general deſign of altering the conſtitution of both. And all this was the more extraordinary, becauſe it could not eaſily be forgot, that whatever oppoſition was made to the uſurpations of *king*

of *England*; and upon their refuſal to fall in with his meaſures, making the like advances to the *diſſenters* of all kinds, who readily and almoſt univerſally complied with him, affecting, in their numerous addreſſes and pamphlets, the ſtyle of *our brethren the Roman catholicks*; whoſe intereſts they put on the ſame foot with their own: and ſome of *Cromwell*'s officers took poſts in the army raiſed againſt the prince of *Orange*. Theſe proceedings of theirs they can only extenuate by urging the provocations they had met from the church in king *Charles*'s reign; which, though perhaps excuſable upon the ſcore of human infirmity, are not by any means a plea of merit equal to the conſtancy and ſufferings of the biſhops and clergy, or of the head and fellows of *Magdalen college*, that furniſhed the prince of *Orange*'s declaration with ſuch powerful arguments to juſtify and promote the *revolution*.

Therefore a *church of England man* abhors the humour of the age, in delighting to fling ſcandals upon the clergy in general; which beſides the diſgrace to the *reformation*, and to religion itſelf, caſt

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an ignominy upon the kingdom, that it doth not deſerve. We have no better materials to compound the prieſthood of, than the maſs of mankind, which corrupted, as it is, thoſe who receive orders muſt have ſome vices to leave behind them when they enter into the church, and if a few do ſtill adhere, it is no wonder, but rather a great one that they are no worſe. Therefore he cannot think *ambition*, or *love of power*, more juſtly laid to their charge than to other men, becauſe that would be to make religion itſelf, or at leaſt the beſt conſtitution of *church-government*, anſwerable for the errors and depravity of human nature.

Within theſe laſt two hundred years, all ſorts of temporal power have been wreſted from the clergy, and much of their eccleſiaſtick, the reaſon or juſtice of which proceeding I ſhall not examine; but that the remedies were a little too violent, with reſpect to their *poſſeſſions*, the legiſlature hath lately confeſſed by the remiſſion of their *firſt fruits*. Neither do the common libellers deny this, who, in their invectives, only tax the church

with an inſatiable deſire of power and wealth, (equally common to all bodies of men, as well as individuals) but thank God, that the laws have deprived them of both. However, it is worth obſerving the juſtice of parties; the ſects among us are apt to complain, and think it hard uſage to be reproached now after fifty years, for overturning the ſtate, for the murder of a king, and the indignity of an uſurpation; yet theſe very men, and their partiſans, are continually reproaching the clergy, and laying to their charge the pride, the avarice, the luxury, the ignorance, and ſuperſtition of *popiſh* times for a thouſand years paſt.

He thinks it a ſcandal to government, that ſuch an unlimited liberty ſhould be allowed of publiſhing books againſt thoſe doctrines in religion, wherein all chriſtians have agreed, much more to connive at ſuch tracts as rejects all revelation, and by their conſequences often deny the very being of a God. Surely it is not a ſufficient attonement for the writers, that they profeſs much loyalty to the preſent government, and ſprinkle up and

and down ſome arguments in favour of the *diſſenters*; that they diſpute, as ſtrenuouſly as they can, for liberty of conſcience, and inveigh largely againſt all eccleſiaſticks under the name of *high-church*; and, in ſhort, under the ſhelter of ſome popular principles in politicks and religion, undermine the foundations of all piety and virtue.

As he doth not reckon every *ſchiſm* of that damnable nature which ſome would repreſent, ſo he is very far from cloſing with the new opinion of thoſe who would make it no crime at all; and argue at a wild rate, that God almighty is delighted with the variety of faith and worſhip, as he is with the varieties of nature. To ſuch abſurdities are men carried by the affectation of *free-thinking*, and *removing the prejudices of education*, under which head they have for ſome time begun to liſt *morality* and *religion*. It is certain that before the rebellion in 1642, though the number of *puritans* (as they were then called) were as great as it is with us, and though they affected to follow paſtors of that denomination, yet thoſe paſtors had

epiſcopal ordination, poſſeſſed preferments in the church, and were ſometimes promoted to biſhopricks themſelves. But a breach in the general form of worſhip was, in thoſe days, reckoned ſo dangerous and ſinful in itſelf; and ſo offenſive to *Roman catholicks* at home and abroad, that it was too unpopular to be attempted; neither, I believe, was the expedient then found out of maintaining ſeparate paſtors out of private purſes.

When a *ſchiſm* is once ſpread in a nation, there grows at length a diſpute, which are the ſchiſmaticks. Without entering on the arguments uſed by both ſides among us to fix the guilt on each other, it is certain, that in the ſenſe of the law, the *ſchiſm* lies on that ſide, which oppoſeth itſelf to the religion of the ſtate. I leave it among the *divines* to dilate upon the danger of *ſchiſm* as a ſpiritual evil; but I would conſider it only as a temporal one. And I think it clear, that any great ſeparation from the eſtabliſhed worſhip, though to a new one that is more pure and perfect, may be an occaſion of endangering the publick peace, becauſe it will compoſe

poſe a body always in reſerve, prepared to follow any diſcontented heads, upon the plauſible pretexts of advancing *true religion*, and oppoſing error, ſuperſtition, or idolatry. For this reaſon *Plato* lays it down as a maxim, that *men ought to worſhip the gods according to the laws of the country*; and he introduces *Socrates*, in his laſt diſcourſe, utterly diſowning the crime laid to his charge, of *teaching new divinities* or methods of worſhip. Thus the poor *Hugonots* of *France* were engaged in a civil war by the ſpecious pretences of ſome, who, under the guiſe of religion, ſacrificed ſo many thouſand lives to their own ambition and revenge. Thus was the whole body of *puritans* in *England* drawn to be inſtruments, or abettors of all manner of villainy, by the artifices of a *few men*, whoſe * deſigns from the firſt, were levelled to deſtroy the conſtitution both of religion and government. And thus even in *Holland* itſelf, where it is pretended that the variety of ſects live ſo amicably together, and in ſuch perfect

* Lord *Clarendon*'s hiſtory.

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obedience to the magiſtrate, it is notorious how a turbulent party joining with the *Arminians*, did, in the memory of our fathers, attempt to deſtroy the liberty of that republick. So that upon the whole, where ſects are tolerated in a ſtate, it is fit they ſhould enjoy a full liberty of conſcience, and every other privilege of free-born ſubjects, *to which no power is annexed.* And to preſerve their obedience upon all emergencies, a government cannot give them too much eaſe, nor truſt them with too little *power.*

The *clergy* are uſually charged with a *perſecuting ſpirit*, which they are ſaid to diſcover by an implacable hatred to all *diſſenters*; and this appears to be more unreaſonable, becauſe they ſuffer leſs in their intereſts by a *toleration*, than any of the *conforming laity*: for while the *church* remains in its preſent form, no diſſenter can poſſibly have any ſhare in its dignities, revenues, or power; whereas, by once receiving the ſacrament, he is rendered capable of the higheſt employments in the ſtate. And it is very poſſible, that a narrow education, together with a mix-

ture of human infirmity, may help to beget among ſome of the *clergy in poſſeſſion* ſuch an averſion and contempt for all *innovators*, as *phyſicians* are apt to have for *empirick*; or *lawyers* for *petti-foggers*, or *merchants* for *pedlers*; but ſince the number of ſectaries doth not concern the clergy either in point of intereſt or conſcience, (it being an evil not in their power to remedy) it is more fair and reaſonable to ſuppoſe their diſlike proceeds from the dangers they apprehend to the peace of the commonwealth, in the ruin whereof they muſt expect to be the firſt and greateſt ſufferers.

To conclude this *ſection*, it muſt be obſerved, that there is a very good word, which hath of late ſuffered much by both parties, I mean *moderation*, which the one ſide very juſtly diſowns, and the other as unjuſtly pretends to. Beſides what paſſes every day in converſation, any man who reads the papers publiſhed by Mr. *Leſley*, and others of his ſtamp, muſt needs conclude, that if this author could make the nation ſee his adverſaries under the colours he paints them in, we have nothing elſe

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to do, but riſe as one man, and deſtroy ſuch wretches from the face of the earth. On the other ſide, how ſhall we excuſe the advocates for *moderation*; among whom I could appeal to a hundred papers of univerſal approbation by the cauſe they were writ for, which lay ſuch principles to the whole body of the tories, as, if they were true, and believed, our next buſineſs ſhould in prudence be, to erect gibbets in every pariſh, and hang them out of the way. But I ſuppoſe it is preſumed, the common people underſtand *raillery*, or at leaſt *rhetorick*, and will not take *hyperboles* in too literal a ſenſe; which however in ſome junctures might prove a deſperate experiment. And this is *moderation* in the *modern* ſenſe of the word, to which, ſpeaking impartially, the bigots of both parties are *equally* entitled.

SECT.

SECT. II.

The ſentiments of a church of England man, *with reſpect to government.*

WE look upon it as a very juſt reproach, though we cannot agree where to fixt it, that there ſhould be ſo much violence, and hatred in religious matters among men who agree in all fundamentals, and only differ in ſome ceremonies, or, at moſt, mere ſpeculative points. Yet, is not this frequently the caſe between contending parties in a ſtate? for inſtance; do not the generality of *whigs* and *tories* among us profeſs to agree in the ſame *fundamentals*, their loyalty to the queen, their abjuration of the *pretender*, the ſettlement of the crown in the proteſtant line, and a revolution principle? their affection to the church eſtabliſhed, with toleration of diſſenters? nay, ſometimes they go farther, and paſs over into each other's principles; the *whigs* become great aſſertors of the prerogative, and the *tories* of the people's liberty; theſe crying down almoſt the whole

whole ſett of biſhops, and thoſe defending them; ſo that the differences fairly ſtated, would be much of a ſort with thoſe in religion among us, and amount to little more than, *who ſhould take place*, or *go in and out firſt*, or *kiſs the queen's hand*; and what are theſe but a few *court ceremonies?* or *who ſhould be in the miniſtry?* and what is that to the body of the nation, but a mere *ſpeculative point?* yet I think it muſt be allowed, that no religious ſects ever carried their mutual averſions to greater heighths than our ſtate-parties have done, who, the more to inflame their paſſions, have mixed religious and civil animoſities together; borrowing one of their appellations from the church, with the addition of *high* and *low*, how little ſoever their diſputes relate to the term, as it is generally underſtood.

I now proceed to deliver the ſentiments of a *church of England man*, with reſpect to government.

He doth not think the church of *England* ſo narrowly calculated, that it cannot fall in with any regular ſpecies of govern-

government; nor doth he think any one regular ſpecies of government more acceptable to God than another. The three generally received in the *ſchools* have all of them their ſeveral perfections, and are ſubject to their ſeveral depravations. However, few ſtates are ruined by any defect in their inſtitution, but generally by the corruption of manners, againſt which the beſt inſtitution is no longer a ſecurity, and without which a very ill one may ſubſiſt and flouriſh: whereof there are two pregnant inſtances now in *Europe*. The firſt is the *ariſtocracy* of *Venice*, which, founded upon the wiſeſt maxims, and digeſted by a great length of time, hath in our age admitted ſo many abuſes through the degeneracy of the nobles, that the period of its duration ſeems to approach. The other is the united republicks of the *ſtates-general*, where a vein of temperance, induſtry, parſimony, and a publick ſpirit, running through the whole body of the people, hath preſerved an infant commonwealth, of an untimely birth and ſickly conſtitution, for above an hundred years, through

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ſo many dangers and difficulties, as a much more healthy one could never have ſtruggled againſt without thoſe advantages.

Where ſecurity of perſon and property are preſerved by laws, which none but the *whole* can repeal, there the great ends of government are provided for, whether the adminiſtration be in the hands of *one*, or of *many*. Where any one *perſon* or *body* of men, who do not repreſent the *whole*, ſeize into their hands the power in the laſt reſort, there is properly no longer a government, but what *Ariſtotle* and his followers call the *abuſe* and *corruption* of one. This diſtinction excludes arbitrary power, in whatever numbers; which notwithſtanding all that *Hobbes*, *Filmer*, and others, have ſaid to its advantage, I look upon as a greater evil than *anarchy* itſelf, as much as a *ſavage* is in a happier ſtate of life, than a *ſlave* at the oar.

It is reckoned ill manners, as well as unreaſonable, for men to quarrel upon difference in opinion; becauſe that is uſually ſuppoſed to be a thing, which no man can help in himſelf; but this I do not

not conceive to be an univerſal infallible maxim, except in thoſe caſes where the queſtion is pretty equally diſputed among the learned and the wiſe: where it is otherwiſe, a man of tolerable reaſon, ſome experience, and willing to be inſtructed, may apprehend he is got into a wrong opinion, though the whole courſe of his mind and inclination would perſuade him to believe it true; he may be convinced that he is in an error, though he does not ſee where it lies, by the bad effects of it in the common conduct of his life, and by obſerving thoſe perſons, for whoſe wiſdom and goodneſs he hath the greateſt deference, to be of a contrary ſentiment. According to *Hobbes*'s compariſon of *reaſoning* with *caſting up accounts*, whoever finds a miſtake in the *ſum total*, muſt allow himſelf out, though after repeated trials he may not ſee in which article he has miſreckoned. I will inſtance in one opinion, which I look upon every man obliged in conſcience to quit, or in prudence to conceal; I mean, that whoever argues in defence of abſolute power in a ſingle perſon, though he offers the old

plauſible plea, that *it is his opinion, which he cannot help, unleſs he be convinced*, ought in all free ſtates to be treated as the common enemy of mankind. Yet this is laid as a heavy charge upon the *clergy* of the two reigns before the *revolution*, who under the terms of *paſſive obedience* and *non-reſiſtance*, are ſaid to have preached up the unlimited power of the prince, becauſe they found it a doctrine that pleaſed the court, and made way for their preferment. And I believe, there may be truth enough in this accuſation to convince us, that human frailty will too often interpoſe itſelf among perſons of the holieſt function. However it may be offered in excuſe for the clergy, that in the beſt ſocieties there are ſome ill members, which a corrupted court and miniſtry will induſtriouſly find out and introduce. Beſides, it is manifeſt, that the greater number of thoſe, who held and preached this doctrine, were miſguided by equivocal terms, and by perfect ignorance in the principles of government, which they had not made any part of their ſtudy. The queſtion originally put, and as I remember to have heard

heard it diſputed in publick ſchools, was this, *Whether under any pretence whatſoever it may be lawful to reſiſt the ſupreme magiſtrate?* which was held in the negative; and this is certainly the right opinion. But many of the clergy and other learned men, deceived by a dubious expreſſion, miſtook the *object* to which *paſſive obedience* was due. By the *ſupreme magiſtrate* is properly underſtood the *legiſlative* power, which in all governments muſt be abſolute and unlimited. But the word *magiſtrate* ſeeming to denote a *ſingle perſon*, and to expreſs the *executive* power, it came to paſs, that the obedience due to the *legiſlature* was, for want of knowing or conſidering this eaſy diſtinction, miſapplied to the *adminiſtration*. Neither is it any wonder, that the clergy, or other well-meaning people ſhould fall into this error, which deceived *Hobbes* himſelf ſo far, as to be the foundation of all the political miſtakes in his books, where he perpetually confounds the *executive* with the *legiſlative* power, though all well inſtituted ſtates have ever placed them in different hands, as may be obvi-

ous to thoſe, who know any thing of *Athens*, *Sparta*, *Thebes*, and other republicks of *Greece*, as well as the greater ones of *Carthage* and *Rome*.

Beſide it is to be conſidered, that when theſe doctrines began to be preached among us, the kingdom had not quite worn out the memory of that horrid *rebellion*, under the conſequences of which it had groaned almoſt twenty years. And a *weak prince*, in conjunction with a ſucceſſion of moſt proſtitute miniſters, began again to diſpoſe the people to new attempts, which it was, no doubt, the clergy's duty to endeavour to prevent, though ſome of them for want of knowledge in temporal affairs, and others perhaps from a worſe principle, proceeded upon a topick, that, ſtrictly followed, would enſlave all mankind.

Among other theological arguments made uſe of in thoſe times in praiſe of monarchy, and juſtification of abſolute obedience to a prince, there ſeemed to be one of a ſingular nature: it was urged, that *heaven* was governed by a *monarch*, who had none to controul his pow-

er, but was abſolutely obeyed: then it followed, that earthly governments were the more perfect, the nearer they imitated the government in heaven. All which I look upon as the ſtrongeſt argument againſt *deſpotick* power that ever was offered; ſince no reaſon can poſſibly be aſſigned, why it is beſt for the world, that God almighty hath ſuch a power, which doth not directly prove that no mortal man ſhould ever have the like.

But though a *church of England man* thinks every ſpecies of government equally *lawful*, he does not think them equally *expedient*; or for every country indifferently. There may be ſomething in the climate, naturally diſpoſing men towards one ſort of obedience; as it is manifeſt all over *Aſia*, where we never read of any commonwealth, except ſome ſmall ones on the weſtern coaſts eſtabliſhed by the *Greeks*. There may be a great deal in the ſituation of a country, and in the preſent *genius* of the people. It hath been obſerved, that the temperate climates uſually run into moderate governments, and

the extremes into deſpotick power. It is a remark of *Hobbes*, that the youth of *England* are corrupted in their principles of government by reading the authors of *Greece* and *Rome*, who writ under commonwealths. But it might have been more fairly offered for the honour of liberty, that while the reſt of the known world was over-run with the arbitrary government of ſingle perſons, *arts* and *ſciences* took their riſe, and flouriſhed, only in thoſe few ſmall territories, where the people were *free*. And though *learning* may continue after *liberty* is loſt, as it did in *Rome* for a while upon the foundations laid under the commonwealth, and the particular patronage of ſome emperors, yet it hardly ever began under a *tyranny* in any nation: becauſe *ſlavery* is of all things the greateſt clog and obſtacle to *ſpeculation*. And indeed, arbitrary power is but the firſt natural ſtep from *anarchy* or the *ſavage life*; the adjuſting *power* and *freedom* being an effect and conſequence of maturer thinking: and this is no where ſo duly regulated as in a limited monarchy: becauſe I believe it may

may paſs for a maxim in ſtate, that *the adminiſtration cannot be placed in too* few *hands*, nor the *legiſlature in too* many. Now in this material point the conſtitution of the *Engliſh* government far exceeds all others at this time on the earth, to which the preſent eſtabliſhment of the *church* doth ſo happily agree, that, I think, whoever is an enemy to *either*, muſt of neceſſity be ſo to *both*.

He thinks, as our monarchy is conſtituted, an *hereditary* right is much to be preferred before *election*. Becauſe the government here, eſpecially by ſome late amendments, is ſo regularly diſpoſed in all its parts, that it almoſt *executes* itſelf. And therefore upon the death of a prince among us, the adminiſtration goes on without any rub or interruption. For the ſame reaſons we have leſs to apprehend from the *weakneſs* or *fury* of our monarchs, who have ſuch wiſe councils to guide the firſt, and laws to reſtrain the other. And therefore this hereditary right ſhould be kept ſo ſacred, as never to break the ſucceſſion, unleſs where the preſerving it may endanger the conſtitution; which is

not from any intrinſick merit, or unalienable right in a *particular family*, but to avoid the conſequences that uſually attend the ambition of competitors, to which elective kingdoms are expoſed; and which is the only obſtacle to hinder them from arriving at the greateſt perfection that government can poſſibly reach. Hence appears the abſurdity of that diſtinction between a king *de facto*, and one *de jure*, with reſpect to us. For every *limited* monarch is a king *de jure*, becauſe he governs by the conſent of the *whole*, which is authority ſufficient to aboliſh all precedent right. If a king come in by *conqueſt*, he is no longer a *limited* monarch; if he afterwards conſent to limitations, he becomes immediately king *de jure* for the ſame reaſon.

The great advocates for ſucceſſion, who affirm it ought not to be violated upon any regard or conſideration whatſoever, do inſiſt much upon one argument, that ſeems to carry little weight. They would have it, that a *crown* is a prince's birthright, and ought at leaſt to be as well ſecured to him and his poſterity, as the inheritance

heritance of any private man; in ſhort, that he has the ſame title to his kingdom, which every individual has to his property: now the conſequence of this doctrine muſt be, that as a man may find ſeveral ways to waſte, miſpend, or abuſe his patrimony, without being anſwerable to the laws; ſo a king may in like manner do what he will with *his own*; that is, he may ſquander and miſapply his revenues, and even alienate the crown, without being called to an account by his ſubjects. They allow ſuch a prince to be guilty indeed of much folly and wickedneſs, but for theſe he is *anſwerable to God*, as every private man muſt be that is guilty of miſmanagement in his own concerns. Now the folly of this reaſoning will beſt appear, by applying it in a parallel caſe: ſhould any man argue, that a phyſician is ſuppoſed to underſtand his own art beſt; that the law protects and encourages his profeſſion; and therefore, although he ſhould manifeſtly preſcribe *poiſon* to all his patients, whereof they ſhould immediately die, he cannot be juſtly puniſhed, but is anſwerable only to God: or ſhould the

the ſame be offered in behalf of a divine, who would preach againſt religion and moral duties: in either of theſe two caſes, every body would find out the ſophiſtry, and preſently anſwer, that although common men are not exactly ſkilled in the compoſition or application of medicines, or in preſcribing the limits of duty; yet the difference between *poiſons* and *remedies* is eaſily known by their effects; and common reaſon ſoon diſtinguiſhes between *virtue* and *vice*: and it muſt be neceſſary to forbid both theſe the further practice of their profeſſions, becauſe their crimes are not purely perſonal to the phyſician or the divine, but deſtructive to the publick. All which is infinitely ſtronger in reſpect to a prince, in whoſe good or ill conduct the happineſs or miſery of a whole nation is included; whereas it is of ſmall conſequence to the publick, farther than example, how any private perſon manageth his property.

But granting that the right of a lineal ſucceſſor to a crown were upon the ſame foot with the property of a ſubject; ſtill it may at any time be transferred by the legiſlative

legiſlative power, as other properties frequently are. The ſupreme power in a ſtate can *do no wrong*, becauſe whatever that doth, is the action of all: and when the *lawyers* apply this maxim to the *king*, they muſt underſtand it only in that ſenſe, as he is adminiſtrator of the ſupreme power; otherwiſe it is not univerſally true, but may be controuled in ſeveral inſtances eaſy to produce.

And theſe are the topicks we muſt proceed upon to juſtify our excluſion of the young *Pretender* in *France*; that of his ſuſpected birth being merely popular, and therefore not made uſe of, as I remember, ſince the revolution, in any ſpeech, vote, or proclamation, where there was occaſion to mention him.

As to the *abdication* of king *James*, which the advocates on that ſide look upon to have been forcible and unjuſt, and conſequently void in itſelf, I think a man may obſerve every article of the *Engliſh* church, without being in much pain about it. It is not unlikely that all doors were laid open for his departure, and perhaps not without the privity of the

the prince of *Orange*, as reaſonably concluding, that the kingdom might better be ſettled in his abſence: but to affirm he had any cauſe to apprehend the ſame treatment with his *father*, is an improbable ſcandal flung upon the nation by a few bigotted *French* ſcribblers, or the invidious aſſertion of a ruined party at home in the bitterneſs of their ſouls, not one material circumſtance agreeing with thoſe in 1648; and the greateſt part of the nation having preſerved the utmoſt horror for that ignominious *murder*: but whether his removal were cauſed by his own *fears*, or other men's *artifices*, it is manifeſt to me, that ſuppoſing the throne to be vacant, which was the foot the nation went upon, the body of the people was thereupon left at liberty to chuſe what form of government they pleaſed, by themſelves or their repreſentatives.

The only difficulty of any weight againſt the proceedings at the revolution, is an obvious objection, to which the writers upon that ſubject have not yet given a direct or ſufficient anſwer, as if they were in pain at ſome conſequences, which they

they apprehend thoſe of the contrary opinion might draw from it. I will repeat this objection, as it was offered me ſometime ago with all its advantages by a very pious, learned, and worthy gentleman of the nonjuring-party *.

The force of his argument turned upon this; that the laws made by the ſupreme power cannot otherwiſe than by the ſupreme power be annulled: that this conſiſting in *England* of a king, lords, and commons, whereof each have a negative voice, no two of them can repeal or enact a law without conſent of the third; much leſs may any one of them be entirely excluded from its part of the legiſlature by a *vote* of the other two. That all theſe maxims were openly violated at the revolution; where an aſſembly of the *nobles* and *people*, not ſummoned by the king's writ (which was an eſſential part of the conſtitution) and conſequently no lawful meeting, did merely upon their own authority declare the king to have abdi-

* Mr. *Nelſon*, author of the Feaſts and Faſts of the Church of *England*.

cated,

cated, the throne vacant, and gave the crown by a vote to a *nephew*, when there were three children to inherit, though by the fundamental laws of the realm, the next heir is immediately to ſucceed. Neither doth it appear, how a prince's *abdication* can make any other ſort of vacancy in the throne, than would be cauſed by his death, ſince he cannot abdicate for his children, (who claim their right of ſucceſſion by act of parliament) otherwiſe than by his own conſent in form to a bill from the two houſes.

And this is the difficulty, that ſeems chiefly to ſtick with the moſt reaſonable of thoſe, who, from a mere ſcruple of conſcience, refuſe to join with us upon the revolution-principle; but for the reſt are, I believe, as far from loving arbitrary government, as any others can be, who are born under a free conſtitution, and are allowed to have the leaſt ſhare of common good ſenſe.

In this objection there are two queſtions included: firſt, whether upon the foot of our conſtitution, as it ſtood in the reign of the late king *James*, a king of *England*

England may be depoſed? The ſecond, is, whether the people of *England*, convened by their own authority, after the king had withdrawn himſelf in the manner he did, had power to alter the ſucceſſion.

As for the firſt, it is a point I ſhall not preſume to determine; and ſhall therefore only ſay, that to any man who holds the negative, I would demand the liberty of putting the caſe as ſtrongly as I pleaſe. I will ſuppoſe a prince limited by laws like ours, yet running into a thouſand caprices of cruelty like *Nero* or *Caligula*; I will ſuppoſe him to murder his mother and his wife; to commit inceſt, to raviſh matrons, to blow up the ſenate, and burn his metropolis; openly to renounce God and Chriſt, and worſhip the devil: theſe and the like exorbitances are in the power of a ſingle perſon to commit, without the advice of a miniſtry, or aſſiſtance of an army. And if ſuch a king, as I have deſcribed, cannot be depoſed but by his own conſent in parliament, I do not well ſee how he can be *reſiſted*, or what can be meant by a *limited* monarchy; or what ſignifies the people's conſent

conſent in making and repealing laws, if the perſon who adminiſters hath no tie but conſcience, and is anſwerable to none but God. I deſire no ſtronger proof that an opinion muſt be falſe, than to find very great abſurdities annexed to it; and there cannot be greater than in the preſent caſe; for it is not a bare ſpeculation that kings may run into ſuch enormities as are above-mentioned; the practice may be proved by examples not only drawn from the firſt *Cæſars*, or later emperors, but many modern princes of *Europe*; ſuch as *Peter the cruel*, *Philip the ſecond of Spain*, *John Baſilovits of Muſcovy*, and in our own nation, king *John*, *Richard the third*, and *Henry the eighth*. But there cannot be equal abſurdities ſuppoſed in maintaining the contrary opinion; becauſe it is certain, that princes have it in their power to keep a majority on their ſide by any tolerable adminiſtration, till provoked by continual oppreſſions; no man indeed can then anſwer, where the madneſs of the people will ſtop.

As to the ſecond part of the objection; whether the people of *England* convened by

by their own authority, upon king *James*'s precipitate departure, had power to alter the ſucceſſion?

In anſwer to this, I think it is manifeſt from the practice of the wiſeſt nations, and who ſeem to have had the trueſt notions of freedom, that when a prince was laid aſide for male-adminiſtration, the *nobles* and *people*, if they thought it neceſſary for the publick weal, did reſume the adminiſtration of the ſupreme power, (the power itſelf having been always in them) and did not only alter the ſucceſſion, but often the very form of government too; becauſe they believed their was no natural right in one man to govern another, but that all was by inſtitution, force, or conſent. Thus, the cities of *Greece*, when they drove out their tyrannical kings, either choſe others from a new family, or aboliſhed the kingly government, and became free ſtates. Thus the *Romans*, upon the expulſions of *Tarquin*, found it inconvenient for them to be ſubject any longer to the pride, the luſt, the cruelty and arbitrary will of ſingle perſons, and therefore by general con-

ſent entirely altered the whole frame of their government. Nor do I find the proceedings of either, in this point, to have been condemned by any hiſtorian of the ſucceeding ages.

But a great deal hath been already ſaid by other writers upon this invidious and beaten ſubject; therefore I ſhall let it fall; though the point is commonly miſtaken, eſpecially by the *lawyers*; who of all others ſeem leaſt to underſtand the nature of government in general; like underworkmen, who are expert enough at making a ſingle wheel in a clock, but are utterly ignorant how to adjuſt the ſeveral parts, or regulate the movements.

To return therefore from this digreſſion: it is a *church of England man*'s opinion, that the freedom of a nation conſiſts in an abſolute *unlimited legiſlative power*, wherein the whole body of the people are fairly repreſented, and in an *executive* duly *limited*; becauſe on this ſide likewiſe there may be dangerous degrees, and a very ill extreme. For when two parties in a ſtate are pretty equal in *power*, *pretentions*, *merit* and *virtue*, (for theſe

theſe two laſt are, with relation to parties and a court, quite different things) it hath been the opinion of the beſt writers upon government, that a prince ought not in any ſort to be under the guidance or influence of either, becauſe he declines by this means from his office of preſiding over the *whole*, to be the head of a *party*, which, beſides the indignity, renders him anſwerable for all publick miſmanagements, and the conſequences of them; and in whatever ſtate this happens, there muſt either be a weakneſs in the prince or miniſtry, or elſe the former is too much reſtrained by the nobles, or thoſe who repreſent the people.

To conclude: A *church of England man* may with prudence and a good conſcience approve the profeſſed principles of one party more than the other, according as he thinks they beſt promote the good of church and ſtate; but he will never be ſwayed by paſſion or intereſt to advance an opinion, merely becauſe it is *that* of the party he moſt approves; which one ſingle principle he looks upon as the root of all our civil animoſities. To en-

ter into a party, as into an order of *friers*, with ſo reſigned an obedience to ſuperiors, is very unſuitable both with the civil and religious liberties we ſo zealouſly aſſert. Thus the underſtandings of a whole ſenate are often enſlaved by three or four leaders on each ſide, who, inſtead of intending the publick weal, have their hearts wholly ſet upon ways and means how to get or to keep employments. But to ſpeak more at large, how has this ſpirit of faction mingled itſelf with the maſs of the people, changed their nature and manners, and the very genius of the nation? broke all the laws of charity, neighbourhood, alliance, and hoſpitality, deſtroyed all ties of friendſhip, and divided families againſt themſelves? and no wonder it ſhould be ſo, when in order to find out the character of a perſon, inſtead of enquiring whether he be a man of virtue, honour, piety, wit, good ſenſe, or learning; the modern queſtion is only, whether he be a *whig* or a *tory*, under which terms all good and ill qualities are included.

Now, becauſe it is a point of difficulty to chuſe an exact middle between two ill extremes, it may be worth enquiring in the preſent caſe, which of theſe a wiſe and good man would rather ſeem to avoid: taking therefore their own good and ill characters with due abatements and allowances for partiality and paſſion, I ſhould think that in order to preſerve the conſtitution entire in church and ſtate, whoever hath a true value for both, would be ſure to void the extremes of *whig* for the ſake of the former, and the extremes of *tory* on account of the latter.

I have now ſaid all, that I could think convenient upon ſo nice a ſubject, and find I have the ambition common with other reaſoners, to wiſh at leaſt that both parties may think me *in the right*, which would be of ſome uſe to thoſe who have any virtue left, but are blindly drawn into the extravagances of either, upon falſe repreſentations, to ſerve the ambition or malice of deſigning men, without any proſpect of their own. But if that is not to be hoped for, my next wiſh ſhould be, that both might think me *in*

the wrong: which I would underſtand as an ample juſtification of myſelf, and a ſure ground to believe, that I have proceeded at leaſt with impartiality, and perhaps with truth.

AN

AN

ARGUMENT

To prove that the ABOLISHING of

CHRISTIANITY

IN

ENGLAND

may, as things now ſtand, be attended with ſome inconveniencies, and perhaps not produce thoſe many good effects propoſed thereby.

Written in the Year 1708.

I Am very ſenſible, what a weakneſs and preſumption it is, to reaſon againſt the general humour and diſpoſition of the world. I remember it was with great juſtice, and a due regard to the freedom, both of the publick and the preſs, forbidden upon ſeveral penalties to write, or diſcourſe, or lay wagers againſt the *union*, even before it was confirmed by parliament; becauſe that was looked upon as a deſign to oppoſe the current of the people, which beſides the folly of it, is

a manifeſt breach of the fundamental law, that makes this majority of opinion the voice of God. In like manner, and for the very ſame reaſons, it may perhaps be neither ſafe nor prudent to argue againſt the aboliſhing of chriſtianity at a juncture, when all parties appear ſo unanimouſly determined upon the point, as we cannot but allow from their actions, their diſcourſes, and their writings. However, I know not how, whether from the affectation of ſingularity, or the preverſeneſs of human nature, but ſo it unhappily falls out, that I cannot be entirely of this opinion. Nay, though I were ſure an order were iſſued for my immediate proſecution by the attorney-general, I ſhould ſtill confeſs, that in the preſent poſture of our affairs at home or abroad I do not yet ſee the abſolute neceſſity of extirpating the chriſtian religion from among us.

This perhaps may appear too great a paradox even for our wiſe and paradoxical age to endure; therefore I ſhall handle it with all tenderneſs, and with the utmoſt deference to that great and profound

found majority, which is of another ſentiment.

And yet the curious may pleaſe to obſerve, how much the genius of a nation is liable to alter in half an age: I have heard it affirmed for certain by ſome very old people, that the contrary opinion was even in their memories as much in vogue as the other is now; and that a project for the aboliſhing of chriſtianity would then have appeared as ſingular, and been thought as abſurd, as it would be at this time to write or diſcourſe in its defence.

Therefore I freely own, that all appearances are againſt me. The ſyſtem of the goſpel, after the fate of other ſyſtems, is generally antiquated and exploded, and the maſs or body of the common people, among whom it ſeems to have had its lateſt credit, are now grown as much aſhamed of it as their betters; opinions, like faſhions, always deſcending from thoſe of quality to the middle ſort, and thence to the vulgar, where at length they are dropped and vaniſh.

But

But here I would not be miſtaken, and muſt therefore be ſo bold as to borrow a diſtinction from the writers on the other ſide, when they make a difference between nominal and real *trinitarians*. I hope no reader imagines me ſo weak to ſtand up in the defence of real chriſtianity, ſuch as uſed in primitive times (if we may believe the authors of thoſe ages) to have an influence upon mens belief and actions: to offer at the reſtoring of that, would indeed be a wild project; it would be to dig up foundations; to deſtroy at one blow all the wit, and half the learning of the kingdom; to break the entire frame and conſtitution of things; to ruin trade, extinguiſh arts and ſciences, with the profeſſors of them; in ſhort, to turn our courts, exchanges and ſhops into deſarts; and would be full as abſurd as the propoſal of *Horace*, where he adviſes the *Romans*, all in a body, to leave their city, and ſeek a new ſeat in ſome remote part of the world, by way of cure for the corruption of their manners.

Therefore I think this caution was in itſelf altogether unneceſſary, (which I have

have inſerted only to prevent all poſſibility of cavilling) ſince every candid reader will eaſily underſtand my diſcourſe to be intended only in defence of nominal chriſtianity, the other having been for ſome time wholly laid aſide by general conſent, as utterly inconſiſtent with our preſent ſchemes of wealth and power.

But why we ſhould therefore caſt off the name and title of chriſtians, although the general opinion and reſolution be ſo violent for it, I confeſs I cannot (with ſubmiſſion) apprehend, nor is the conſequence neceſſary. However, ſince the undertakers propoſe ſuch wonderful advantages to the nation by this project, and advance many plauſible objections againſt the ſyſtem of chriſtianity, I ſhall briefly conſider the ſtrength of both, fairly allow them their greateſt weight, and offer ſuch anſwers as I think moſt reaſonable. After which I will beg leave to ſhew, what inconveniencies may poſſibly happen by ſuch an innovation in the preſent poſture of our affairs.

Firſt, one great advantage propoſed by the aboliſhing of chriſtianity is, that it would

would very much enlarge and eſtabliſh liberty of conſcience, that great bulwark of our nation, and of the proteſtant religion, which is ſtill too much limited by prieſtcraft, notwithſtanding all the good intentions of the legiſlature, as we have lately found by a ſevere inſtance. For it is confidently reported, that two young gentlemen of real hopes, bright wit, and profound judgment, who, upon a thorough examination of cauſes and effects, and by the mere force of natural abilities, without the leaſt tincture of learning, having made a diſcovery, that there was no God, and generouſly communicating their thoughts for the good of the publick, were ſome time ago, by an unparralleled ſeverity, and upon I know not what obſolete law, broke for blaſphemy. And as it has been wiſely obſerved, if perſecution once begins, no man alive knows how far it may reach, or where it will end.

In anſwer to all which, with deference to wiſer judgments, I think this rather ſhews the neceſſity of a nominal religion among us. Great wits love to be free with

with the higheſt objects; and if they cannot be allowed a God to reviſe or renounce, they will ſpeak evil of dignities, abuſe the government, and reflect upon the miniſtry; which I am ſure few will deny to be of much more pernicious conſequence, according to the ſaying of *Tiberius*, *deorum offenſa diis curæ*. As to the particular fact related, I think it is not fair to argue from one inſtance, perhaps another cannot be produced: yet (to the comfort of all thoſe who may be apprehenſive of perſecution) blaſphemy we know is freely ſpoken a million of times in every coffee-houſe and tavern, or where-ever elſe good company meet. It muſt be allowed indeed, that to break an *Engliſh* free-born officer only for blaſphemy, was, to ſpeak the gentleſt of ſuch an action, a very high ſtrain of abſolute power. Little can be ſaid in excuſe for the general; perhaps he was afraid it might give offence to the allies, among whom, for ought we know, it may be the cuſtom of the country to believe a God. But if he argued, as ſome have done, upon a miſtaken principle, that an officer who is guilty

guilty of ſpeaking blaſphemy, may ſome time or other proceed ſo far as to raiſe a mutiny, the conſequence is by no means to be admitted: for ſurely the commander of an *engliſh* army is like to be but ill obeyed, whoſe ſoldiers fear and reverence him as little as they do a Deity.

It is further objected againſt the goſpel ſyſtem, that it obliges men to the belief of things too difficult for free-thinkers, and ſuch who have ſhaken off the prejudices that uſually cling to a confined education. To which I anſwer, that men ſhould be cautious how they raiſe objections, which reflect upon the wiſdom of the nation. Is not every body freely allowed to believe whatever he pleaſeth, and to publiſh his belief to the world whenever he thinks fit, eſpecially if it ſerves to ſtrengthen the party, which is in the right? Would any indifferent foreigner, who ſhould read the trumpery lately written by * *Aſgil*, *Tindal*, *Toland*, *Coward*,

* *Aſgil* wrote an argument to prove, that man may be tranſlated from hence into eternal life, without paſſing through death.

Toland publiſhed ſome deiſtical books.

Tindal's writings were blaſphemous and atheiſtical.

Coward

Coward, and forty more, imagine the goſpel to be our rule of faith, and confirmed by parliaments? Does any man either believe, or ſay he believes, or deſire to have it thought that he ſays he believes one ſyllable of the matter? And is any man worſe received upon that ſcore, or does he find his want of nominal faith a diſadvantage to him in the purſuit of any civil or military employment? What if there be an old dormant ſtatute or two againſt him, are they not now obſolete to a degree, that *Empſon* and *Dudley* themſelves, if they were now alive, would find it impoſſible to put them in execution.

It is likewiſe urged, that there are by computation in this kingdom above ten thouſand parſons, whoſe revenues, added to thoſe of my lords the biſhops, would ſuffice to maintain at leaſt two hundred young gentlemen of wit and pleaſure, and free-thinking, enemies to prieſtcraft, narrow principles, pedantry, and prejudices, who might be an ornament to the court

Coward aſſerted the mortality of the ſoul, and alledged the ſeat of it to be in the blood.

and

and town: and then again, ſo great a number of able [bodied] divines might be a recruit to our fleet and armies. This indeed appears to be a conſideration of ſome weight: but then, on the other ſide, ſeveral things deſerve to be conſidered likewiſe: as firſt, whether it may not be thought neceſſary, that in certain tracts of country, like what we call pariſhes, there ſhall be one man at leaſt of abilities to read and write. Then it ſeems a wrong computation, that the revenues of the church throughout this iſland would be large enough to maintain two hundred young gentlemen, or even half that number, after the preſent refined way of living, that is, to allow each of them ſuch a rent, as, in the modern form of ſpeech, would make them eaſy. But ſtill there is in this project a greater miſchief behind; and we ought to beware of the woman's folly, who killed the hen, that every morning laid her a golden egg. For, pray what would become of the race of men in the next age, if we had nothing to truſt to beſides the ſcrophulous conſumptive productions furniſhed by our men

men of wit and pleaſure, when having ſquandered away their vigor, health and eſtates, they are forced, by ſome diſagreeable marriage, to piece up their broken fortunes, and entail rottenneſs and politeneſs on their poſterity? Now, here are ten thouſand perſons reduced, by the wiſe regulations of *Henry* the eighth, to the neceſſity of a low diet, and moderate exerciſe, who are the only great reſtorers of our breed, without which the nation would in an age or two become one great hoſpital.

Another advantage propoſed by the aboliſhing of chriſtianity is the clear gain of one day in ſeven, which is now entirely loſt, and conſequently the kingdom one ſeventh leſs conſiderable in trade, but fineſs, and pleaſure; beſides the loſs to the publick of ſo many ſtately ſtructures now in the hands of the clergy, which might be converted into play-houſes, market-houſes, exchanges, common dormitories, and other publick edifices.

I hope I ſhall be forgiven a hard word, if I call this a perfect cavil. I readily own there hath been an old cuſtom, time out

of mind, for people to aſſemble in the churches every *Sunday*, and that ſhops are ſtill frequently ſhut, in order, as it is conceived, to preſerve the memory of that ancient practice; but how this can prove a hindrance to buſineſs or pleaſure, is hard to imagine. What if the men of pleaſure are forced, one day in the week, to game at home inſtead of the *chocolate-houſes*? are not the *taverns* and *coffee-houſes* open? can there be a more convenient ſeaſon for taking a doſe of phyſick? are fewer claps got upon *Sundays* than other days? is not that the chief day for traders to ſum up the accounts of the week, and for lawyers to prepare their briefs? but I would fain know, how it can be pretended, that the churches are miſapplied? where are more appointments and rendezvouſes of gallantry? where more care to appear in the foremoſt box, with greater advantage of dreſs? where more meetings for buſineſs? where more bargains driven of all ſorts? and where ſo many conveniencies or incitements to ſleep?

There is one advantage, greater than any

any of the foregoing, propoſed by the aboliſhing of chriſtianity; that it will utterly extinguiſh parties among us, by removing thoſe factious diſtinctions of high and low church, of *whig* and *tory*, *preſbyterian* and *church of England*, which are now ſo many grievous clogs upon publick proceedings, and are apt to diſpoſe men to prefer the gratifying themſelves or depreſſing their adverſaries, before the moſt important intereſt of the ſtate.

I confeſs, if it were certain, that ſo great an advantage would redound to the nation by this expedient, I would ſubmit, and be ſilent: but will any man ſay, that if the words *whoring*, *drinking*, *cheating*, *lying*, *ſtealing*, were by act of parliament ejected out of the *Engliſh* tongue and dictionaries, we ſhould all awake next morning chaſte and temperate, honeſt and juſt, and lovers of truth. Is this a fair conſequence? or if the phyſicians would forbid us to pronounce the words *pox*, *gout*, *rheumatiſm* and *ſtone*, would that expedient ſerve like ſo many *taliſmans* to deſtroy the diſeaſes themſelves? are party and faction rooted in men's hearts no deeper than

phraſes borrowed from religion, or founded upon no firmer principles? and is our language ſo poor, that we cannot find other terms to expreſs them? are envy, pride, avarice, and ambition ſuch ill nomenclators, that they cannot furniſh appellations for their owners? will not *Heydukes* and *mamalukes*, *mandarins*, and *patſhaws*, or any other words formed at pleaſure, ſerve to diſtinguiſh thoſe who are in the miniſtry from others, who would be in it if they could? what, for inſtance, is eaſier than to vary the form of ſpeech, and inſtead of the word church, make it a queſtion in politicks, whether the monument be in danger? becauſe religion was neareſt at hand to furniſh a few convenient phraſes, is our invention ſo barren, we can find no other? ſuppoſe, for argument ſake, that the *tories* favoured *Margarita* †, the *whigs* Mrs. *Tofts*, and the *Trimmers Valentini*, would not *Margaritian*, *Toftians*, and *Valentinians* be very tolerable marks of diſtinction? the *Praſini* and *Veniti*, two

† Italian ſingers then in vogue: Marguarita was afterwards married to Dr. Pepuſche.

moſt

moſt virulent factions in *Italy*, began (if I remember right) by a diſtinction of colours in ribbands: and we might contend with as good a grace about the dignity of the *blue* and the *green*, which would ſerve us properly to divide the court, the parliament, and the kingdom between them, as any terms of art whatſoever borrowed from religion. And therefore I think there is little force in this objection againſt chriſtianity, or proſpect of ſo great an advantage as is propoſed in the aboliſhing of it.

It is again objected, as a very abſurd ridiculous cuſtom, that a ſett of men ſhould be ſuffered, much leſs employed and hired, to bawl one day in ſeven againſt the lawfulneſs of thoſe methods moſt in uſe towards the purſuit of greatneſs, riches, and pleaſure, which are the conſtant practice of all men alive on the other ſix. But this objection is, I think, a little unworthy ſo refined an age as ours. Let us argue this matter calmly: I appeal to the breaſt of any polite free-thinker, whether, in the purſuit of gratifying a predominant paſſion, he hath not always felt a wonderful

incitement by reflecting, it was a thing forbidden: and therefore we ſee, in order to cultivate this taſte, the wiſdom of the nation hath taken ſpecial care, that the ladies ſhould be furniſhed with prohibited ſilks, and the men with prohibited wine. And indeed it were to be wiſhed, that ſome other prohibitions were promoted, in order to improve the pleaſures of the town; which for want of ſuch expedients, begin already, as I am told, to flag and grow languid, giving way daily to cruel inroads from the ſpleen.

It is likewiſe propoſed as a great advantage to the publick, that if we once diſcard the ſyſtem of the goſpel, all religion will of courſe be baniſhed for ever, and conſequently along with it thoſe grievous prejudices of education, which, under the names of virtue, conſcience, honour, juſtice, and the like, are ſo apt to diſturb the peace of human minds, and the notions whereof are ſo hard to be eradicated by right reaſon or free-thinking, ſometimes during the whole courſe of our lives.

Here firſt I obſerve, how difficult it is to

to get rid of a phraſe, which the world is once grown fond of, though the occaſion that firſt produced it be entirely taken away. For ſeveral years paſt, if a man had but an ill-favoured noſe, the deep thinkers of the age would ſome way or other contrive to impute the cauſe to the prejudice of his education. From this fountain are ſaid to be derived all our fooliſh notions of juſtice, piety, love of our country; all our opinions of God or a future ſtate, heaven, hell, and the like: and there might formerly perhaps have been ſome pretence for this charge. But ſo effectual care hath been ſince taken to remove thoſe prejudices, by an entire change in the methods of education, that (with honour I mention it to our polite innovators) the young gentlemen, who are now on the ſcene, ſeem to have not the leaſt tincture left of thoſe infuſions, or ſtring of thoſe weeds; and by conſequence the reaſon for aboliſhing nominal chriſtianity upon that pretext, is wholly ceaſed.

For the reſt, it may perhaps admit a controverſy, whether the baniſhing all

notions of religion whatſoever would be convenient for the vulgar. Not that I am in the leaſt of opinion with thoſe, who hold religion to have been the invention of politicians to keep the lower part of the world in awe by the fear of inviſible powers; unleſs mankind were then very different from what it is now: for I look upon the maſs or body of our people here in *England* to be as free-thinkers, that is to ſay, as ſtaunch unbelievers, as any of the higheſt rank. But I conceive ſome ſcattered notions about a ſuperior power to be of ſingular uſe for the common people, as furniſhing excellent materials to keep children quiet when they grow peeviſh, and providing topicks of amuſement in a tedious winter-night.

Laſtly, it is propoſed, as a ſingular advantage, that the aboliſhing of chriſtianity will very much contribute to the uniting of *proteſtants*, by enlarging the terms of communion, ſo as to take in all ſorts of *diſſenters*, who are now ſhut out of the pale upon account of a few ceremonies, which all ſides confeſs to be things indifferent: that this alone will effectually

anſwer

anſwer the great ends of a ſcheme for comprehenſion by opening a large noble gate, at which all bodies may enter; whereas the chaffering with *diſſenters*, and dodging about this or the other ceremony, is but like opening a few wickets, and leaving them at jar, by which no more than one can get in at a time, and that not without ſtooping, and ſideling, and ſqueezing his body.

To all this I anſwer, that there is one darling inclination of mankind, which uſually affects to be a retainer to religion, though ſhe be neither its parent, its godmother, or its friend; I mean the ſpirit of oppoſition, that lived long before chriſtianity, and can eaſily ſubſiſt without it. Let us, for inſtance, examine wherein the oppoſition of ſectaries among us conſiſts; we ſhall find chriſtianity to have no ſhare in it at all. Does the goſpel any where preſcribe a ſtarched ſqueezed countenance, a ſtill formal gait, a ſingularity of manners and habit, or any affected modes of ſpeech different from the reaſonable part of mankind? Yet, if chriſtianity did not lend its name to ſtand in the gap, and to employ

employ or divert theſe humours, they muſt of neceſſity be ſpent in contraventions to the laws of the land, and diſturbance of the publick peace. There is a portion of enthuſiaſm aſſigned to every nation, which if it hath not proper objects to work on, will burſt out, and ſet all in a flame. If the quiet of a ſtate can be bought by only flinging men a few ceremonies to devour, it is a purchaſe no wiſe man would refuſe. Let the maſtiffs amuſe themſelves about a ſheep's ſkin ſtuffed with hay, provided it will keep them from worrying the flock. The inſtitution of convents abroad ſeems in one point a ſtrain of great wiſdom, there being few irregularities in human paſſions, that may not have recourſe to vent themſelves in ſome of thoſe orders, which are ſo many retreats for the ſpeculative, the melancholy, the proud, the ſilent, the politick, and the moroſe, to ſpend themſelves, and evaporate the noxious particles; for each of whom we in this iſland are forced to provide a ſeveral ſect of religion, to keep them quiet; and whenever chriſtianity ſhall be aboliſhed, the legiſla-

legiſlature muſt find ſome other expedient to employ and entertain them. For what imports it how large a gate you open, if there will be always left a number, who place a pride and a merit in refuſing to enter?

Having thus conſidered the moſt important objections againſt chriſtianity, and the chief advantages propoſed by the aboliſhing thereof; I ſhall now with equal deference and ſubmiſſion to wiſer judgments, as before, proceed to mention a few inconveniencies that may happen, if the goſpel ſhould be repealed, which perhaps the projectors may not have ſufficiently conſidered.

And firſt, I am very ſenſible how much the gentlemen of wit and pleaſure are apt to murmur, and be choaked at the ſight of ſo many daggled-tail parſons, who happen to fall in their way, and offend their eyes; but at the ſame time theſe wiſe reformers do not conſider, what an advantage and felicity it is for great wits to be always provided with objects of ſcorn and contempt, in order to exerciſe and improve their talents, and divert their ſpleen from falling

falling on each other, or on themſelves, eſpecially when all this may be done without the leaſt imaginable danger to their perſons.

And to urge another argument of a parallel nature: if chriſtianity were once aboliſhed, how could the free-thinkers, the ſtrong reaſoners, and the men of profound learning, be able to find another ſubject ſo calculated in all points whereon to diſplay their abilities? what wonderful productions of wit ſhould we be deprived of from thoſe, whoſe genius by continual practice hath been wholly turned upon raillery and invectives againſt religion, and would therefore never be able to ſhine or diſtinguiſh themſelves upon any other ſubject? we are daily complaining of the great decline of wit among us, and would we take away the greateſt, perhaps the only topick we have left? who would ever have ſuſpected *Aſgil* for a wit, or *Toland* for a philoſopher, if the inexhauſtible ſtock of chriſtianity had not been at hand to provide them with materials? what other ſubject through all art or nature could have produced *Tindal* for a profound

found author, or furniſhed him with readers? it is the wiſe choice of the ſubject that alone adorns and diſtinguiſhes the writer. For had an hundred ſuch pens as theſe been employed on the ſide of religion, they would have immediately ſunk into ſilence and oblivion.

Nor do I think it wholly groundleſs, or my fears altogether imaginary, that the aboliſhing of chriſtianity may perhaps bring the church in danger, or at leaſt put the ſenate to the trouble of another ſecuring vote. I deſire I may not be miſtaken; I am far from preſuming to affirm or think that the church is in danger at preſent, or as things now ſtand; but we know not how ſoon it may be ſo, when the chriſtian religion is repealed. As plauſible as this project ſeems, there may be a dangerous deſign lurking under it. Nothing can be more notorious, than that the *atheiſts*, *deiſts*, *ſocinians*, *anti-trinitarians*, and other ſub-diviſions of free-thinkers, are perſons of little zeal for the preſent eccleſiaſtical eſtabliſhment: their declared opinion is for repealing the ſacramental teſt; they are very indifferent with regard to ceremonies;

monies; nor do they hold the *jus divinum* of epiſcopacy: therefore this may be intended as one politick ſtep towards altering the conſtitution of the church eſtabliſhed, and ſetting up *preſbytery* in the ſtead, which I leave to be further conſidered by thoſe at the helm.

In the laſt place, I think nothing can be more plain, than that by this expedient, we ſhall run into the evil we chiefly pretend to void: and that the aboliſhment of the chriſtian religion will be the readieſt courſe we can take to introduce popery. And I am the more inclined to this opinion, becauſe we know it hath been the conſtant practice of the *jeſuits* to ſend over emiſſaries with inſtructions to perſonate themſelves members of the ſeveral prevailing ſects among us. So it is recorded, that they have at ſundry times appeared in the diſguiſe of *preſbyterians*, *anabaptiſts*, *independents*, and *quakers*, according as any of theſe were moſt in credit; ſo, ſince the faſhion hath been taken up of exploding religion, the *popiſh* miſſionaries have not been wanting to mix with the free-thinkers; among whom *Toland*, the great oracle

cle of the *anti-chriſtians*, is an *Iriſh* prieſt, the ſon of an *Iriſh* prieſt; and the moſt learned and ingenious author of a book called the *rights of the chriſtian church*, was in a proper juncture reconciled to the *Romiſh* faith, whoſe true ſon, as appears by a hundred paſſages in his treatiſe, he ſtill continues. Perhaps I could add ſome others to the number; but the fact is beyond diſpute, and the reaſoning they proceed by is right: for ſuppoſing chriſtianity to be extinguiſhed, the people will never be at eaſe till they find out ſome other method of worſhip; which will as infallibly produce ſuperſtition, as ſuperſtition will end in *popery*.

And therefore, if notwithſtanding all I have ſaid, it ſtill be thought neceſſary to have a bill brought in for repealing chriſtianity, I would humbly offer an amendment, that inſtead of the word chriſtianity may be put religion in general, which I conceive will much better anſwer all the good ends propoſed by the projectors of it. For as long as we leave in being a God and his providence, with all the neceſſary conſequences, which curious and inquiſitive

ſitive men will be apt to draw from ſuch premiſes, we do not ſtrike at the root of the evil, though we ſhould ever ſo effectually annihilate the preſent ſcheme of the goſpel: for, of what uſe is freedom of thought, if it will not produce freedom of action, which is the ſole end, how remote ſoever in appearance, of all objections againſt chriſtianity; and therefore, the free-thinkers conſider it as a ſort of edifice, wherein all the parts have ſuch a mutual dependance on each other, that if you happen to pull out one ſingle nail, the whole fabrick muſt fall to the ground. This was happily expreſſed by him, who had hard of a text brought for proof of the trinity, which in an antient manuſcript wes differently read; he thereupon immediately took the hint, and by a ſudden deduction of a long * *ſorites* moſt logically concluded: why, if it be as you ſay, I may ſafely whore and drink on, and defy the parſon. From which, and many the like inſtances eaſy to be pro-

* A *ſorites* differs from a ſyllogiſm, in that it takes only the minor propoſition. An example of this figure may be ſeen in *John Bull*, Vol. VI. p. 173.

duced

duced, I think nothing can be more manifeſt, than that the quarrel is not againſt any particular points of hard digeſtion in the chriſtian ſyſtem, but againſt religion in general, which, by laying reſtraints on human nature, is ſuppoſed the great enemy to the freedom of thought and action.

Upon the whole, if it ſhall ſtill be thought for the benefit of church and ſtate, that chriſtianity be aboliſhed, I conceive however, it may be more convenient to defer the execution to a time of peace, and not venture in this conjuncture to diſoblige our allies, who, as it falls out, are all chriſtians, and many of them, by the prejudices of their education, ſo bigoted, as to place a ſort of pride in the appellation. If upon being rejected by them, we are to truſt to an alliance with the *Turk*, we ſhall find ourſelves much deceived: for, as he is too remote, and generally engaged in war with the *Perſian* emperor, ſo his people would be more ſcandalized at our infidelity, than our chriſtian neighbours. For the *Turks* are not only ſtrict obſervers of religious

worſhip, but, what is worſe, believe a God; which is more than is required of us, even while we preſerve the name of chriſtians.

To conclude: whatever ſome may think of the great advantages to trade by this favourite ſcheme, I do very much apprehend, that in ſix months time after the act is paſt for the extirpation of the goſpel, the *Bank* and *Eaſt-India* ſtock may fall at leaſt one *per cent.* And ſince that is fifty times more than ever the wiſdom of our age thought fit to venture for the preſervation of chriſtianity, there is no reaſon we ſhould be at ſo great a loſs, merely for the ſake of deſtroying it.

A PRO-

A

PROJECT

FOR THE

ADVANCEMENT OF RELIGION

AND THE

REFORMATION OF MANNERS.

BY A PERSON OF QUALITY.

Written in the Year 1709.

To the countess of BERKLEY*.

MADAM,

MY intention in prefixing your ladyship's name, is not, after the common form, to desire your protection of the following papers; which I take to be a very unreasonable request; since by being inscribed to your ladyship, though without your knowledge, and from a concealed hand, you cannot recommend them without some suspicion of partiality. My real design is, I confess, the very same I have often detested in most dedications; that of publishing your praises to the

* This excellent lady, was *Elizabeth*, the daughter of *Baptist Noel*, viscount *Campden*, and sister to *Edward* earl of *Gainsborough*.

world; not upon the ſubject of your noble birth, for I know others as noble; or of the greatneſs of your fortune, for I know others far greater; or of that beautiful race (the images of their parents) which calls you mother; for even this may perhaps have been equalled in ſome other age or country. Beſides, none of theſe advantages do derive any accompliſhments to the owners, but ſerve at beſt only to adorn what they really poſſeſs. What I intend, is your piety, truth, good ſenſe, and good nature, affability, and charity; wherein I wiſh your ladyſhip had many equals, or any ſuperiors; and I wiſh I could ſay, I knew them too, for then your ladyſhip might have had a chance to eſcape this addreſs. In the mean time, I think it highly neceſſary, for the intereſt of virtue and religion, that the whole kingdom ſhould be informed in ſome parts of your character: for inſtance, that the eaſieſt and politeſt converſation, joined with the trueſt piety, may be obſerved in your ladyſhip, in as great perfection as they were even ſeen apart in any other perſons. That by your prudence any

and management under ſeveral diſadvantages, you have preſerved the luſtre of that moſt noble family, into which you are graffed, and which the unmeaſurable profuſion of anceſtors for many generations had too much eclipſed. Then, how happily you perform every office of life, to which providence hath called you: in the education of thoſe two incomparable daughters, whoſe conduct is ſo univerſally admired; in every duty of a prudent, complying, affectionate wife; in that care which deſcends to the meaneſt of your domeſticks; and laſtly, in that endleſs bounty to the poor, and diſcretion where to diſtribute it. I inſiſt on my opinion, that it is of importance for the publick to know this and a great deal more of your ladyſhip; yet whoever goes about to inform them, ſhall, inſtead of finding credit, perhaps be cenuſred for a flatterer. To avoid ſo uſual a reproach, I declare this to be no dedication, but merely an introduction to a propoſal for the advancement of religion and morals, by tracing, however imperfectly, ſome few lineaments in the character of a lady,

[illegible] in the practice [illegible]

[illegible] offered to [illegible] age, I [illegible] that [illegible] improve- [illegible] be- [illegible] from the [illegible] a fu- [illegible] means [illegible] of the [illegible] present happiness of [illegible] as much as faith [illegible] among us, I [illegible] they might in a [illegible] very great trou- [illegible] a perfection as [illegible] receiving. In- [illegible] and obvious, [illegible] to good, [illegible] project reduced [illegible] to want nothing [illegible] mind, who by [illegible] are chief-

[illegible] to propose reme-
dies,

dies, before we are aſſured of the diſeaſe, or to be in fear till we are convinced of the danger; I ſhall firſt ſhew in general, that the nation is extremely corrupted in religion and morals; and then I will offer a ſhort ſcheme for the reformation of both.

As to the firſt, I know it is reckoned but a form of ſpeech, when divines complain of the wickedneſs of the age: however, I believe upon a fair compariſon with other times and countries, it would be found an undoubted truth.

For firſt, to deliver nothing but plain matter of fact without exaggeration or ſatire, I ſuppoſe it will be granted, that hardly one in an hundred among our people of quality or gentry appears to act by any principle of religion; that great numbers of them do entirely diſcard it, and are ready to own their diſbelief of all revelation in ordinary diſcourſe. Nor is the caſe much better among the vulgar, eſpecially in great towns where the profaneneſs and ignorance of handicraftſmen, ſmall traders, ſervants, and the like, are to a degree very hard to be imagined

greater. Then, it is obſerved abroad, that no race of mortals hath ſo little ſenſe of religion as the *Engliſh* ſoldiers; to confirm which, I have been often told by great officers of the army, that in the whole compaſs of their acquaintance they could not recollect three of their profeſſion, who ſeemed to regard or believe one ſyllable of the goſpel: and the ſame at leaſt may be affirmed of the fleet. The conſequences of all which upon the actions of men are equally manifeſt. They never go about, as in former times, to hide or palliate their vices, but expoſe them freely to view, like any other common occurrences of life, without the leaſt reproach from the world or themſelves. For inſtance, any man will tell you he intends to be drunk this evening, or was ſo laſt night, with as little ceremony or ſcruple, as he would tell you the time of the day. He will let you know he is going to a wench, or that he has got a clap, with as much indifferency, as he would a piece of publick news. He will ſwear, curſe or blaſpheme, without the leaſt paſſion or provocation. And though all regard

gard for reputation is not quite laid aſide in the other ſex, it is however at ſo low an ebb, that very few among them ſeem to think virtue and conduct of any neceſſity for preſerving it. If this be not ſo, how comes it to paſs, that women of tainted reputations find the ſame countenance and reception in all publick places with thoſe of the niceſt virtue, who pay and receive viſits from them without any manner of ſcruple; which proceeding, as it is not very old among us, ſo I take it to be of moſt pernicious conſequence: it looks like a ſort of compounding between virtue and vice, as if a woman were allowed to be vicious, provided ſhe be not a profligate; as if there were a certain point, where gallantry ends, and infamy begins; or that an hundred criminal amours were not as pardonable as half a ſcore.

Beſides thoſe corruptions already mentioned, it would be endleſs to enumerate ſuch as ariſe from the exceſs of play or gaming: the cheats, the quarrels, the oaths, and blaſphemies, among the men; among the women, the neglect of houſhold

ſhold affairs, the unlimited freedoms, the undecent paſſion, and laſtly, the known inlet to all lewdneſs, when after an ill run the *perſon* muſt anſwer the defects of the *purſe:* the rule on ſuch occaſions holding true in play, as it does in law; *quod non habet in crumena, luat in corpore.*

But all theſe are trifles in compariſon, if we ſtep into other ſcenes, and conſider the fraud and cozenage of trading men and ſhop-keepers; that inſatiable gulph of injuſtice and oppreſſion, the *law*; the open traffick for all civil and military employments (I wiſh it reſted there *) without the leaſt regard to merit or qualifications; the corrupt management of men in office; the many deteſtable abuſes in chuſing thoſe, who repreſent the people; with the management of intereſt and factions among the repreſentatives: to which I muſt be bold to add, the ignorance of ſome of the lower clergy; the mean ſervile temper of others; the pert pragmatical demeanour of ſeveral young ſtagers in divinity, upon their firſt producing

* Perhaps the author intended to intimate that it extended to eccleſiaſtical.

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themſelves into the world; with many other circumſtances needleſs, or rather invidious to mention; which falling in with the corruptions already related, have, however unjuſtly, almoſt rendered the whole order contemptible.

This is a ſhort view of the general depravities among us, without entering into particulars, which would be an endleſs labour. Now, as univerſal and deep-rooted as theſe appear to be, I am utterly deceived, if an effectual remedy might not be applied to moſt of them; neither am I at preſent upon a wild ſpeculative project, but ſuch a one as may be eaſily put in execution.

For, while the prerogative of giving all employments continues in the crown, either immediately, or by ſubordination, it is in the power of the *prince* to make piety and virtue become the faſhion of the age, if at the ſame time he would make them neceſſary qualifications for favour and preferment.

It is clear from preſent experience, that the bare example of the beſt prince will not have any mighty influence, where the

age is very corrupt. For, when was there ever a better prince on the throne than the preſent queen? I do not talk of her talent for government, her love of the people, or any other qualities that are purely regal; but her piety, charity, temperance, conjugal love, and whatever other virtue do beſt adorn a private life; wherein, without queſtion or flattery, ſhe hath no ſuperior: yet neither will it be ſatire or peeviſh invective to affirm, that infidelity and vice are not much diminiſhed ſince her coming to the crown, nor will, in probability, till more effectual remedies be provided.

Thus human nature ſeems to lie under the diſadvantage, that the example alone of a vicious prince will in time corrupt an age; but the example of a good one will not be ſufficient to reform it without further endeavours. Princes muſt therefore ſupply this defect by a vigorous exerciſe of that authority, which the law has left them, by making it every man's intereſt and honour to cultivate religion and virtue, by rendering vice a diſgrace, and the certain ruin to preferment or pretenſions: all

all which they ſhould firſt attempt in their own courts and families. For inſtance, might not the queen's domeſticks of the middle and lower ſort be obliged, upon penalty of ſuſpenſion or loſs of their employments, to a conſtant weekly attendance on the ſervice of the church; to a decent behaviour in it; to receive the ſacrament four times a year; to avoid ſwearing and irreligious prophane diſcourſes; and to the appearance at leaſt of temperance and chaſtity? might not the care of all this be committed to the ſtrict inſpection of proper officers? might not thoſe of higher rank and nearer acceſs to her majeſty receive her own commands to the ſame purpoſe, and be countenanced or diſfavoured according as they obey? might not the queen lay her injunctions on the biſhops, and other great men of undoubted piety, to make diligent enquiry, and give her notice, if any perſon about her ſhould happen to be of libertine principles or morals? might not all thoſe, who enter upon any office in her majeſty's family, be obliged to take an oath parallel with that againſt ſimony,

mony, which is adminiſtered to the clergy? it is not to be doubted, but that if theſe or the like proceedings were duly obſerved, morality and religion would ſoon become faſhionable court virtues, and be taken up as the only methods to get or keep employments there; which alone would have mighty influence upon many of the nobility and principal gentry.

But, if the like methods were purſued as far as poſſible with regard to thoſe, who are in the great employments of ſtate, it is hard to conceive how general a reformation they might in time produce among us. For if piety and virtue were once reckoned qualifications neceſſary to preferment, every man thus endowed, when put into great ſtations, would readily imitate the queen's example in the diſtribution of all offices in his diſpoſal; eſpecially if any apparent tranſgreſſion through favour or partiality would be imputed to him for a miſdemeanor, by which he muſt certainly forfeit his favour and ſtation: and there being ſuch great numbers in employment, ſcattered through every town and county in this kingdom,

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if all theſe were exemplary in the conduct of their lives, things would ſoon take a new face, and religion receive a mighty encouragement: nor would the publick weal be leſs advanced; ſince of nine offices in ten that are ill executed, the defect is not in capacity or underſtanding, but in common honeſty. I know no employment, for which piety diſqualifies any man; and if it did, I doubt the objection would not be very ſeaſonably offered at preſent: becauſe, it is perhaps too juſt a reflection, that in the diſpoſal of places, the queſtion whether a perſon be *fit* for what he is recommended to, is generally the laſt that is thought on, or regarded.

I have often imagined, that ſomething parallel to the office of cenſors antiently in *Rome* would be of mighty uſe among us, and could be eaſily limited from running into any exorbitances. The *Romans* underſtood liberty at leaſt as well as we, were as jealous of it, and upon every occaſion as bold aſſertors. Yet I do not remember to have read any great complaint of the abuſes in that office among them;

them; but many admirable effects of it are left upon record. There are ſeveral pernicious vices frequent and notorious among us, that eſcape or elude the puniſhment of any law we have yet invented, or have had no law at all againſt them; ſuch as atheiſm, drunkenneſs, fraud, avarice, and ſeveral others; which by this inſtitution, wiſely regulated, might be much reformed. Suppoſe, for inſtance, that itinerary commiſſioners were appointed to inſpect every where throughout the kingdom into the conduct (at leaſt) of men in office with reſpect to their morals and religion, as well as their abilities; to receive the complaints and informations, that ſhould be offered againſt them, and make their report here upon oath to the court or the miniſtry, who ſhould reward or puniſh accordingly. I avoid entering into the particulars of this or any other ſcheme, which coming from a private hand might be liable to many defects, but would ſoon be digeſted by the wiſdom of the nation: and ſurely, ſix thouſand pounds a year would not be ill laid out among as many commiſſioners duly qualified, who

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in three diviſions ſhould be perſonally obliged to take their yearly circuits for that purpoſe.

But this is beſide my preſent deſign, which was only to ſhew what degree of reformation is in the power of the queen, without the interpoſition of the legiſlature, and which her majeſty is, without queſtion, obliged in conſcience to endeavour by her authority, as much as ſhe doth by her practice.

It will be eaſily granted, that the example of this great town hath a mighty influence over the whole kingdom; and it is as manifeſt, that the town is equally influenced by the court, and the miniſtry, and thoſe who by their employments, or their hopes, depend upon them. Now, if under ſo excellent a princeſs, as the preſent queen, we would ſuppoſe a family ſtrictly regulated, as I have above propoſed; a miniſtry, where every ſingle perſon was of diſtinguiſhed piety; if we ſhould ſuppoſe all great offices of ſtate and law filled after the ſame manner, and with ſuch as were equally diligent in chuſing perſons, who in their ſeveral ſubordinati-

ons would be obliged to follow the examples of their ſuperiors, under the penalty of loſs of favour and place; will not every body grant, that the empire of vice and irreligion would be ſoon deſtroyed in this great metropolis, and receive a terrible blow through the whole iſland, which hath ſo great an intercourſe with it, and ſo much affects to follow its faſhions?

For, if religion were once underſtood to be the neceſſary ſtep to favour and preferment, can it be imagined that any man would openly offend againſt it, who had the leaſt regard for his reputation or his fortune? there is no quality ſo contrary to any nature, which men cannot affect, and put on upon occaſion in order to ſerve an intereſt, or gratify a prevailing paſſion. The proudeſt man will perſonate humility, the moroſeſt learn to flatter, the lazieſt will be ſedulous and active, where he is in purſuit of what he hath much at heart: how ready therefore would moſt men be to ſtep into the paths of virtue and piety, if they infallibly led to favour and fortune!

If ſwearing and prophaneneſs, ſcandalous and avowed lewdneſs, exceſſive gaming and intemperance, were a little diſcountenanced in the army, I cannot readily ſee what ill conſequences could be apprehended. If gentlemen of that profeſſion were at leaſt obliged to ſome external decorum in their conduct, or even if a profligate life and character were not a means of advancement, and the appearance of piety a moſt infallible hindrance, it is impoſſible the corruptions there ſhould be ſo univerſal and exorbitant. I have been aſſured by ſeveral great officers, that no troops abroad are ſo ill diſciplined as the *Engliſh*; which cannot well be otherwiſe, while the common ſoldiers have perpetually before their eyes the vicious example of their leaders; and it is hardly poſſible for thoſe to commit any crime, whereof theſe are not infinitely more guilty, and with leſs temptation.

It is commonly charged upon the gentlemen of the army, that the beaſtly vice of drinking to exceſs hath been lately from their example reſtored among us; which for ſome years before was almoſt dropt in

England. But, whoever the introducers were, they have ſucceeded to a miracle; many of the young nobility and gentry are already become great proficients, and are under no manner of concern to hide their talent, but are got beyond all ſenſe of ſhame, or fear of reproach.

This might ſoon be remedied, if the queen would think fit to declare, that no young perſon of quality whatſoever, who was notoriouſly addicted to that or any other vice, ſhould be capable of her favour, or even admitted into her preſence; with poſitive command to her miniſters, and others in great office, to treat them in the ſame manner; after which, all men who had any regard for their reputation, or any proſpect of preferment, would avoid their commerce. This would quickly make that vice ſo ſcandalous, that thoſe who could not ſubdue, would at leaſt endeavour to diſguiſe it.

By the like methods a ſtop might be put to that ruinous practice of deep gaming; and the reaſon why it prevails ſo much is, becauſe a treatment *directly oppoſite* in every point is made uſe of to pro-

mote it; by which means the laws enacted againſt this abuſe are wholly eluded.

It cannot be denied, that the want of ſtrict diſcipline in the univerſities hath been of pernicious conſequence to the youth of this nation, who are there almoſt left entirely to their own management, eſpecially thoſe among them of better quality and fortune; who, becauſe they are not under a neceſſity of making learning their maintenance, are eaſily allowed to paſs their time and take their degrees with little or no improvement: than which there cannot well be a greater abſurdity. For if no advancement of knowledge can be had from thoſe places, the time there ſpent is at beſt utterly loſt, becauſe every ornamental part of education is better taught elſewhere: and, as for keeping youths out of harm's way, I doubt, where ſo many of them are got together, at full liberty of doing what they pleaſe, it will not anſwer the end. But, whatever abuſes, corruptions, or deviations from ſtatutes have crept into the univerſities through neglect, or length of time, they might in a great degree

be reformed by ſtrict injunctions from court (upon each particular) to the viſitors and heads of houſes; beſides the peculiar authority the queen may have in ſeveral colleges, whereof her predeceſſors were the founders. And among other regulations, it would be very convenient to prevent the exceſs of drinking, with that ſcurvy cuſtom among the lads, and parent of the former vice, the taking of tobacco, where it is not abſolutely neceſſary in point of health.

From the univerſities the young nobility, and others of great fortunes, are ſent for early up to town, for fear of contracting any airs of pedantry by a college education. Many of the younger gentry retire to the inns of court, where they are wholly left to their own diſcretion. And the conſequence of this remiſneſs in education appears by obſerving, that nine in ten of thoſe, who riſe in the church or the court, the law or the army, are younger brothers, or new men, whoſe narrow fortunes have forced them upon induſtry and application.

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As for the inns of court, unleſs we ſuppoſe them to be much degenerated, they muſt needs be the worſt inſtituted ſeminaries in any chriſtian country; but whether they may be corrected without interpoſition of the legiſlature, I have not ſkill enough to determine. However, it is certain, that all wiſe nations have agreed in the neceſſity of a ſtrict education, which conſiſted, among other things, in the obſervance of moral duties, eſpecially juſtice, temperance, and chaſtity, as well as the knowledge of arts, and bodily exerciſes: but all theſe among us are laughed out of doors.

Without the leaſt intention to offend the clergy, I cannot but think, that through a miſtaken notion and practice, they prevent themſelves from doing much ſervice, which otherwiſe might lie in their power, to religion and virtue: I mean, by affecting ſo much to converſe with each other, and caring ſo little to mingle with the laity. They have their particular clubs, and particular coffee-houſes, where they generally appear in cluſters: a ſingle divine dares hardly

ſhew his perſon among numbers of fine gentlemen; or if he happens to fall into ſuch company, he is ſilent and ſuſpicious, in continual apprehenſion that ſome pert man of pleaſure ſhould break an unmannerly jeſt, and render him ridiculous. Now I take this behaviour of the clergy to be juſt as reaſonable, as if the phyſicians ſhould agree to ſpend their time in viſiting one another, or their ſeveral apothecaries, and leave their patients to ſhift for themſelves. In my humble opinion, the clergy's buſineſs lies entirely among the laity; neither is there, perhaps, a more effectual way to forward the ſalvation of men's ſouls, than for ſpiritual perſons to make themſelves as agreeable as they can in the converſations of the world; for which a learned education gives them great advantage, if they would pleaſe to improve and apply it. It ſo happens, that the *men of pleaſure*, who never go to church, nor uſe themſelves to read books of devotion, from their ideas of the clergy from a few poor ſtrolers they often obſerve in the ſtreets, or ſneaking out of ſome perſon of quality's houſe,

houſe, where they are hired by the lady at ten ſhillings a month: while thoſe of better figure and parts do ſeldom appear to correct theſe notions. And let ſome reaſoners think what they pleaſe, it is certain that men muſt be brought to eſteem and love the clergy, before they can be perſuaded to be in love with religion. No man values the beſt medicine, if adminiſtered by a phyſician, whoſe perſon he hates or deſpiſes. If the clergy were as forward to appear in all companies, as other gentlemen, and would a little ſtudy the arts of converſation to make themſelves agreeable, they might be welcome to every party, where there was the leaſt regard for politeneſs or good ſenſe; and conſequently prevent a thouſand vicious or profane diſcourſes, as well as actions; neither would men of underſtanding complain, that a clergyman was a conſtraint upon the company, becauſe they could not ſpeak blaſphemy or obſcene jeſts before him. While the people are ſo jealous of the clergy's ambition, as to abhor all thoughts of the return of eccleſiaſtick diſcipline among them, I do not ſee any other

other method left for men of that function to take, in order to reform the world, then by using all honeſt arts to make themſelves acceptable to the laity. This, no doubt, is part of that wiſdom of the ſerpent, which the author of chriſtianity directs, and is the very method uſed by St. *Paul*, who *became all things to all men, to the Jews a Jew, and a Greek to the Greeks.*

How to remedy theſe inconveniencies, may be a matter of ſome difficulty; ſince the clergy ſeem to be of an opinion, that this humour of ſequeſtring themſelves is a part of their duty; nay, as I remember, they have been told ſo by ſome of their biſhops in their paſtoral letters, particularly by † *one* among them of great merit and diſtinction, who yet, in his own practice, hath all his life-time taken a courſe directly contrary. But I am deceived, if an aukward ſhame, and fear of ill uſage from the laity, have not a greater ſhare in this miſtaken conduct, than their own inclinations: however, if

† Suppoſed to be Dr. Burnet biſhop of Saliſbury.

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he outward profeſſion of religion and irtue were once in practice and countenance at court, as well as among all men n office, or who have any hopes or dependance for preferment, a good treatnent of the clergy would be the neceſſay conſequence of ſuch a reformation; nd they would be ſoon wiſe enough to ee their own duty and intereſt in qualiying themſelves for lay-converſation, vhen once they were out of fear of beng choacked by ribaldry or profaneneſs.

There is one further circumſtance upon his occaſion, which I know not whether t will be very orthodox to mention: the lergy are the only ſett of men among us, vho conſtantly wear a diſtinct habit from thers: the conſequence of which (not n reaſon but in fact) is this, that as long s any ſcandalous perſon appear in that lreſs, it will continue in ſome degree a eneral mark of contempt. Whoever appens to ſee a *ſcoundrel in a gown*, reeling home at midnight (a ſight neither *requent* nor *miraculous)* is apt to enterain an ill idea of the whole order, and t the ſame time to be extremely com-

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ſorted in his own vices. Some remedy might be put to this, if thoſe ſtraggling gentlemen, who come up to town to *ſeek their fortunes*, were fairly diſmiſſed to the *Weſt-Indies*, where there is work enough, and where ſome better proviſion ſhould be made for them, than I doubt there is at preſent. Or, what if no perſon were allowed to wear the habit, who had not ſome preferment in the church, or at leaſt ſome temporal fortune ſufficient to keep him out of contempt? though, in my opinion, it were infinitely better, if all the clergy (except the biſhops) were permitted to appear like other men of the graver ſort, unleſs at thoſe ſeaſons when they are doing the buſineſs of their function.

There is one abuſe in this town, which wonderfully contributes to the promotion of vice; that ſuch men are often put into the commiſſion of the peace, whoſe intereſt it is, that virtue ſhould be utterly baniſhed from among us; who maintain, or at leaſt enrich themſelves by encouraging the groſſeſt immoralities; to whom all the *bawds* of the *ward* pay contribution

tion for ſhelter and protection from the laws. Thus theſe worthy magiſtrates, inſtead of leſſening enormities, are the occaſion of juſt twice as much debauchery as there would be without them. For thoſe infamous women are forced upon doubling their work and induſtry, to anſwer double charges, of paying the juſtice, and ſupporting themſelves. Like thieves who eſcape the gallows, and are let out to ſteal in order to diſcharge the gaoler's fees.

It is not to be queſtioned, but the queen and miniſtry might eaſily redreſs this abominable grievance, by enlarging the number of juſtices of the peace, by endeavouring to chuſe men of virtuous principles, by admitting none who have not conſiderable fortunes; perhaps, by receiving into the number ſome of the moſt eminent clergy: then, by forcing all of them, upon ſevere penalties, to act when there is occaſion, and not permitting any who are offered, to refuſe the commiſſion; but in theſe two laſt caſes, which are very material, I doubt there will be need of the legiſlature.

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The reformation of the ſtage is entirely in the power of the queen; and in the conſequences it hath upon the minds of younger people, doth very well deſerve the ſtricteſt care. Beſides the undecent and prophane paſſages; beſides the perpetual turning into ridicule the very function of the prieſthood, with other irregularities, in moſt modern comedies, which have been often objected to them; it is worth obſerving the diſtributive juſtice of the authors, which is conſtantly applied to the puniſhment of virtue, and the reward of vice; directly oppoſite to the rules of their beſt criticks, as well as to the practice of dramatic poets in all other ages and countries. For example, a country 'ſquire, who is repreſented with no other vice but that of being a clown, and having the provincial accent upon his tongue, which is neither a fault, nor in his power to remedy, muſt be condemned to marry a caſt wench, or a cracked chambermaid. On the other ſide, a rakehell of the town, whoſe character is ſet off with no other accompliſhment but exceſſive prodigality, profaneneſs, intemperance,

temperance, and luſt, is rewarded with a lady of great fortune to repair his own, which his vices had almoſt ruined. And, as in a tragedy the hero is repreſented to have obtained many victories, in order to raiſe his character in the minds of the ſpectators; ſo the hero of a comedy is repreſented to have been victorious in all his intrigues for the ſame reaſon. I do not remember, that our *Engliſh* poets ever ſuffered a criminal amour to ſucceed upon the ſtage, till the reign of king *Charles* the ſecond. Ever ſince that time, the alderman is made a cuckold, the deluded virgin is debauched, and adultery and fornication are ſuppoſed to be committed behind the ſcenes, as part of the action. Theſe and many more corruptions of the theatre, peculiar to our age and nation, need continue no longer, than while the court is content to connive at or neglect them. Surely a penſion would not be ill employed on ſome men of wit, learning and virtue, who might have power to ſtrike out every offenſive or unbecoming paſſage from plays already written, as well as thoſe that may be offered

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to the ſtage for the future. By which and other wiſe regulations, the theatre might become a very innocent and uſeful diverſion, inſtead of being a ſcandal and reproach to our religion and country.

The propoſals I have hitherto made for the advancement of religion and morality, are ſuch as come within reach of the adminiſtration; ſuch as a pious active prince, with a ſteady reſolution, might ſoon bring to effect. Neither am I aware of any objections to be raiſed againſt what I have advanced; unleſs it ſhould be thought, that the making religion a neceſſary ſtep to intereſt and favour might increaſe hypocriſy among us: and I readily believe it would. But if one in twenty ſhould be brought over to true piety by this or the like methods, and the other nineteen be only hypocrites, the advantage would ſtill be great. Beſides, hypocriſy is much more eligible than open infidelity and vice; it wears the livery of religion; it acknowledges her authority, and is cautious of giving ſcandal. Nay, a long continued diſguiſe is too great a conſtraint upon human nature, eſpecially an

Engliſh

Engliſh diſpoſition: men would leave off their vices out of mere wearineſs, rather than undergo the toil and hazard, and perhaps the expence, of practiſing them perpetually in private. And I believe it is often with religion as it is with love; which, by much diſſembling, at laſt grows real.

All other projects to this great end have proved hitherto ineffectual. Laws againſt immorality have not been executed, and proclamations occaſionally iſſued out to inforce them are wholly unregarded, as things of form. Religious ſocieties, though begun with excellent intention, and by perſons of true piety, are ſaid, I know not whether truly or no, to have dwindled into factious clubs, and grown a trade to enrich little knaviſh informers of the meaneſt rank, ſuch as common conſtables, and broken ſhopkeepers.

And that ſome effectual attempt ſhould be made towards ſuch a reformation, is perhaps more neceſſary than people commonly apprehend; becauſe the ruin of a ſtate is generally preceded by an univerſal degeneracy of manners, and contempt

of religion; which is entirely our caſe at preſent.

Diis te minorem quod geris, imperas. Hor.

Neither is this a matter to be deferred, till a more convenient time of peace and leiſure: a reformation in mens faith and morals is the beſt natural, as well as religious means to bring the war to a good concluſion. Becauſe, if men in truſt performed their duty for conſcience ſake, affairs would not ſuffer through fraud, falſhood, and neglect, as they now perpetually do. And if they believed a God, and his providence, and acted accordingly, they might reaſonably hope for his divine aſſiſtance in ſo juſt a cauſe as ours.

Nor could the majeſty of the *Engliſh* crown appear, upon any occaſion, in a greater luſtre either to foreigners or ſubjects, than by an adminiſtration, which producing ſuch great effects, would diſcover ſo much power. And power being the natural appetite of princes, a limited monarch cannot ſo well gratify it in any thing, as a ſtrict execution of the laws.

Beſides;

Beſides; all parties would be obliged to cloſe with ſo good a work as this, for their own reputation: neither is any expedient more likely to unite them. For the moſt violent party-men, I have ever obſerved, are ſuch, as in the conduct of their lives have diſcovered leaſt ſenſe of religion or morality; and when all ſuch are laid aſide, at leaſt thoſe among them as ſhall be found incorrigible, it will be a matter perhaps of no great difficulty to reconcile the reſt.

The many corruptions at preſent in every branch of buſineſs are almoſt inconceivable. I have heard it computed by ſkilful perſons, that of ſix millions raiſed every year for the ſervice of the publick, one third, at leaſt, is ſunk and intercepted through the ſeveral claſſes and ſubordinations of artful men in office, before the remainder is applied to the proper uſe. This is an accidental ill effect of our freedom. And while ſuch men are in truſt, who have no check from within, nor any views but towards their intereſt, there is no other fence againſt them, but the certainty of being hanged upon the

firſt diſcovery, by the arbitrary will of an unlimited monarch, or his *vizier*. Among us the only danger to be apprehended is the loſs of an employment; and that danger is to be eluded a thouſand ways. Beſides, when fraud is great, it furniſhes weapons to defend itſelf: and at worſt, if the crimes be ſo flagrant, that a man is laid aſide out of perfect ſhame, (which rarely happens) he retires loaded with the ſpoils of the nation; *et fruitur diis iratis*. I could name a commiſſion, where ſeveral perſons, out of a ſalary of five hundred pounds, without other viſible revenues, have always lived at the rate of two thouſand, and laid out forty or fifty thouſand upon purchaſes of land or annuities. An hundred other inſtances of the ſame kind might eaſily be produced. What remedy therefore can be found againſt ſuch grievances in a conſtitution like ours, but to bring religion into countenance, and encourage thoſe, who from the hope of future reward, and dread of future puniſhment, will be moved to act with juſtice and integrity?

This is not to be accompliſhed any other

ther way, than by introducing religion as much as poſſible to be the turn and faſhion of the age; which only lies in the power of the adminiſtration, the prince with utmoſt ſtrictneſs regulating the court, the miniſtry, and other perſons in great employment; and theſe by their example and authority reforming all who have dependance on them.

It is certain, that a reformation ſucceſsfully carried on in this great town would in time ſpread itſelf over the whole kingdom; ſince moſt of the conſiderable youth paſs here that ſeaſon of their lives, wherein the ſtrongeſt impreſſions are made, in order to improve their education, or advance their fortune; and thoſe among them, who return into their ſeveral countries, are ſure to be followed and imitated as the greateſt patterns of wit and good breeding.

And if things were once in this train, that is, if virtue and religion were eſtabliſhed as the neceſſary titles to reputation and preferment; and if vice and infidelity were not only loaden with infamy, but made the infallible ruin of all mens

pretenſions; our duty, by becoming our intereſt, would take root in our natures, and mix with the very genius of our people; ſo that it would not be eaſy for the example of one wicked prince to bring us back to our former corruptions.

I have confined myſelf (as it is before obſerved) to thoſe methods for the advancement of piety, which are in the power of a prince, limited like ours, by a ſtrict execution of the laws already in force. And this is enough for a project, that comes without any name or recommendation; I doubt, a great deal more, than will be ſuddenly reduced into practice. Though if any diſpoſition ſhould appear towards ſo good a work, it is certain, that the aſſiſtance of the legiſlative power would be neceſſary to make it more complete. I will inſtance only a few particulars.

In order to reform the vices of this town, which, as we have ſaid, hath ſo mighty an influence on the whole kingdom, it would be very inſtrumental to have a law made, that all taverns and alehouſes ſhould be obliged to diſmiſs their com-

company by twelve at night, and ſhut up their doors; and that no woman ſhould be ſuffered to enter any tavern or ale-houſe upon any pretence whatſoever. It is eaſy to conceive, what a number of ill conſequences ſuch a law would prevent; the miſchiefs of quarrels, and lewdneſs, and theſts, and midnight brawls, the diſeaſes of intemperance and venery, and a thouſand other evils needleſs to mention. Nor would it be amiſs, if the maſters of thoſe publick houſes were obliged, upon the ſevereſt penalties, to give only a proportioned quantity of drink to every company; and when he found his gueſts diſordered with exceſs, to refuſe them any more.

I believe there is hardly a nation in *Chriſtendom*, where all kind of fraud is practiſed in ſo unmeaſurable a degree as with us. The lawyer, the tradeſman, the mechanick, have found ſo many arts to deceive in their ſeveral callings, that they far outgrow the common prudence of mankind, which is in no ſort able to fence againſt them. Neither could the legiſlature in any thing more conſult the publick good, than by providing ſome

effectual remedy againſt this evil, which, in ſeveral caſes deſerves greater puniſhment, than many crimes that are capital among us. The vintner, who by mixing poiſon with his wines deſtroys more lives than any malignant diſeaſe; the lawyer, who perſuades you to a purchaſe, which he knows is mortgaged for more than the worth, to the ruin of you and your family; the banker or ſcrivener, who takes all your fortune to diſpoſe of, when he has before-hand reſolved to break the following day, do ſurely deſerve the gallows much better than the wretch, who is carried there for ſtealing a horſe.

It cannot eaſily be anſwered to God or man, why a law is not made for limiting the preſs; at leaſt ſo far as to prevent the publiſhing of ſuch pernicious books, as under pretence of *free-thinking* endeavour to overthrow thoſe tenets in religion, which have been held inviolable almoſt in all ages by every ſect, that pretend to be chriſtian, and cannot therefore with any colour of reaſon be called *points in controverſy*, or *matters of ſpeculation*, as ſome would pretend. The doctrine of the *tri-*

nity,

nity, the *divinity of Chriſt*, the *immortality of the ſoul*, and even the truth of all *revelation*, are daily exploded and denied in books openly printed; though it is to be ſuppoſed, neither party † avow ſuch principles, or own the ſupporting of them to be any way neceſſary to their ſervice.

It would be endleſs to ſet down every corruption or defect, which requires a remedy from the legiſlative power. Senates are like to have little regard for any propoſals, that come from without doors; though, under a due ſenſe of my own inabilities, I am fully convinced that the unbiaſſed thoughts of an honeſt and wiſe man, employed on the good of his country, may be better digeſted, than the reſults of a multitude, where faction and intereſt too often prevail; as a ſingle guide may direct the way better than five hundred who *have contrary views*, or *look aſquint*, or *ſhut their eyes*.

I ſhall therefore mention but one more particular, which I think the parliament ought to take under conſideration; whe-

† Neither whig nor tory.

ther

ther it be not a ſhame to our country, and a ſcandal to chriſtianity, that in many towns, where there is a prodigious increaſe in the number of houſes and inhabitants, ſo little care ſhould be taken for the building of churches, that five parts in ſix of the people are abſolutely hindered from hearing divine ſervice? particularly here in *London**, where a ſingle miniſter, with one or two ſorry curates, hath the care ſometimes of above twenty thouſand ſouls incumbent on him. A neglect of religion ſo ignominious, in my opinion, that it can hardly be equalled in any civilized age or country.

But, to leave theſe airy imaginations of introducing new laws for the amendment of mankind; what I principally inſiſt on, is a due execution of the old, which lies wholly in the crown, and in the authority derived from thence: I return therefore to my former aſſertion, that, if ſtations of power, truſt, profit,

* This paragraph is known to have given the firſt hint to certain biſhops, particularly to biſhop *Atterbury*, in the earl of *Oxford*'s miniſtry to procure a fund for building fifty new churches in *London*.

and

and honour, were conſtantly made the rewards of virtue and piety, ſuch an adminiſtration muſt needs have a mighty influence on the faith and morals of the whole kingdom: and men of great abilities would *then* endeavour to excel in the duties of a religious life, in order to qualify themſelves for publick ſervice. I may poſſibly be wrong in ſome of the means I preſcribe towards this end: but that is no material objection againſt the deſign itſelf. Let thoſe, who are at the helm, contrive it better, which perhaps they may eaſily do. Every body will agree, that the diſeaſe is manifeſt, as well as dangerous; that ſome remedy is neceſſary, and that none yet applied hath been effectual; which is a ſufficient excuſe for any man, who wiſhes well to his country, to offer his thoughts, when he can have no other end in view but the publick good. The preſent queen is a princeſs of as many and great virtues as ever filled a throne: how would it brighten her character to the preſent and after ages, if ſhe would exert her utmoſt authority to inſtil ſome ſhare of thoſe virtues into her people, which they

they are too degenerate to learn only from her example; and, be it ſpoke with all the veneration poſſible for ſo excellent a ſovereign, her beſt endeavours in this weighty affair are a moſt important part of her duty, as well as of her intereſt, and her honour.

But it muſt be confeſſed, that as things are now, every man thinks he has laid in a ſufficient ſtock of merit, and may pretend to any employment, provided he hath been loud and frequent in declaring himſelf hearty for the government. It is true, he is a *man of pleaſure*, and a *free-thinker*, that is, in other words, he is profligate in his morals, and a deſpiſer of religion; but in point of party, he is one to be *confided* in; he is an aſſertor of liberty and property; he rattles it out againſt *popery* and *arbitrary power*, and *prieſtcraft* and *high-church*. It is enough: he is a perſon fully qualified for any employment in the court or the navy, the law or the revenue; where he will be ſure to leave no arts untried of bribery, fraud, injuſtice, oppreſſion, that he can practiſe with any hope of impunity. No wonder ſuch

ſuch men are true to a government, where liberty runs high, where property, *however attained*, is ſo well ſecured, and where the adminiſtration is at leaſt ſo gentle: it is impoſſible they could chuſe any other conſtitution, without changing to their loſs.

Fidelity to a preſent eſtabliſhment is indeed the principal means to defend it from a foreign enemy, but without other qualifications will not prevent corruptions from within, and ſtates are more often ruined by theſe than the other.

To conclude: whether the propoſals I have offered towards a reformation, be ſuch as are moſt prudent and convenient, may probably be a queſtion; but it is none at all, whether ſome reformation be abſolutely neceſſary; becauſe the nature of things is ſuch, that if abuſes be not remedied, they will certainly increaſe, nor ever ſtop till they end in the ſubverſion of a commonwealth. As there muſt always of neceſſity be ſome corruptions, ſo in a well-inſtituted ſtate the executive power will be always contending againſt them, by *reducing things* (as *Machiavel* ſpeaks)

ſpeaks) *to their firſt principles*, never letting abuſes grow inveterate, or multiply ſo far that it will be hard to find remedies, and perhaps impoſſible to apply them. As he, that would keep his houſe in repair, muſt attend every little breach or flaw, and ſupply it immediately, elſe time alone will bring all to ruin; how much more the common accidents of ſtorms and rain? he muſt live in perpetual danger of his houſe falling about his ears; and will find it cheaper to throw it quite down, and build it again from the ground, perhaps upon a new foundation, or at leaſt in a new form, which may neither be ſo ſafe nor ſo convenient as the old.

A LET-

A LETTER

FROM A

MEMBER of the Houſe of COMMONS in *Ireland*,

TO A

MEMBER of the Houſe of COMMONS in *England*,

CONCERNING THE

SACRAMENTAL TEST.

Written in the Year 1708 *.

SIR,

I Received your letter, wherein you tell me of the ſtrange repreſentations made of us on your ſide of the water. The inſtance you are pleaſed to mention is that of the *preſbyterian miſſionary*, who, according to your phraſe, hath been lately *perſecuted* at *Drogheda* for his religion:

* This tract was reprinted in *Ireland* in 1735, when the attempt to repeal the ſacramental teſt was revived. There was an explanatory advertiſement prefixed, which is ſaid by lord *Orrery* to have been dictated, or ſtrictly reviſed, by the Dean himſelf: but there are inaccuracies in it, which may well be thought ſufficient to deſtroy its authenticity: that which in the firſt paragraph is called the *following treatiſe*, is afterwards ſaid to be an *extract of a diſcourſe*, and it is immediately added, that this *extract* is the *whole*, except ſome paſſages of no conſequence: theſe are included in a parentheſis.

but

but it is eaſy to obſerve, how mighty induſtrious ſome people have been for three or four years paſt, to hand about ſtories of the hardſhips, the merits, the number, and the power of the *preſbyterians* in *Ireland*, to raiſe formidable ideas of the dangers of *popery* there, and to tranſmit all for *England*, improved by great additions, and with ſpecial care to have them inſerted with comments in thoſe infamous weekly papers, that infeſt your coffee-houſes. So, when the clauſe enacting a *ſacramental teſt* was put in execution, it was given out in *England*, that half the juſtices of peace through this kingdom had laid down their commiſſions: whereas, upon examination, the whole number was found to amount only to a dozen or thirteen, and thoſe generally of the loweſt rate in fortune and underſtanding, and ſome of them ſuperannuated. So, when the earl of *Pembroke* was in *Ireland*, and the parliament ſitting, a formal ſtory was very gravely carried to his excellency by ſome zealous members, of a prieſt newly arrived from abroad to the north-weſt parts of *Ireland*, who had publickly preached

preached to his people to fall a murthering the proteſtants; which, though invented to ſerve an end they were then upon, and are ſtill driving at, was preſently handed over, and printed with ſhrewd remarks by your worthy ſcribblers. In like manner the account of that perſon, who was lately expelled our univerſity for reflecting on the memory of king *William*; what a duſt it raiſed, and how foully it was related, is freſh enough in memory. Neither would people be convinced till the univerſity was at the pains of publiſhing a *Latin* paper to juſtify themſelves. And, to mention no more, this ſtory of the *perſecution* at *Drogheda*, how it hath been ſpread and aggravated, what conſequences have been drawn from it, and what reproaches fixed on thoſe who have leaſt deſerved them, we are already informed. Now if the end of all this proceeding were a ſecret and myſtery, I ſhould not pretend to give it an interpretation; but ſufficient care hath been taken to explain it, *firſt*, by addreſſes artificially (if not illegally) procured, to ſhew the miſerable ſtate of the *diſſenters* in *Ireland* by reaſon

of the *ſacramental teſt*, and to deſire the queen's interceſſion, that it might be repealed. *Then*, it is manifeſt, that * our ſpeaker, when he was laſt year in *England*, ſollicited in perſon ſeveral members of both houſes to have it repealed by an act there; though it be a matter purely national, that cannot poſſibly interfere with the trade and intereſt of *England*; and though he himſelf appeared formerly the moſt zealous of all men againſt the injuſtice of binding a nation by laws, to which they do not conſent. And, *laſtly*, thoſe weekly libellers, whenever they get a tale by the end relating to *Ireland*, without once troubling their thoughts about the truth, always end it with an application againſt the *ſacramental teſt*, and the abſolute neceſſity there is of repealing it in both kingdoms. I know it may be reckoned a weakneſs to ſay any thing of ſuch trifles, as are below a ſerious man's notice; much leſs would I diſparage the underſtanding of any party, to think they would chuſe the vileſt and moſt ignorant

* Mr. *Allen Broderick*, afterwards chancellor of *Ireland*, and lord *Middleton*.

among mankind, to employ them for the aſſertors of a cauſe. I ſhall only ſay, that the ſcandalous liberty thoſe wretches take, would hardly be allowed, if it were not mingled with opinions that *ſome men* would be glad to advance. Beſides, how inſipid ſoever thoſe papers are, they ſeem to be levelled to the underſtandings of a great number; they are grown a neceſſary part in coffee-houſe furniture, and ſome time or other may happen to be read by cuſtomers of all ranks for curioſity and amuſement, becauſe they lie always in the way. One of theſe authors (the fellow that was *pilloried*, I have * forgot his name) is indeed ſo grave, ſententious, dogmatical a rogue, that there is no enduring him; the † *obſervator* is much the briſker of the two, and I think farther gone of late in lyes and impudence than his *preſbyterian* brother. [The reaſon why I mention him,

* The fellow that was pilloried, was *Daniel Defoe*, whoſe name *Swift* well knew and remembered, but the circumſtance of the pillory was to be introduced, and the manner of introducing it ſhews great art in the niceſt touches of ſatire, and carries all the marks of ridicule, indignation, and contempt. ORRERY.

He was pilloried for a tract called *The ſhorteſt way with the diſſenters*.

† Mr. *John Tutchin*.

is to have an occaſion of letting you know, that you have not dealt ſo galantly with us, as we did with you in a parallel caſe: laſt year a paper was brought here from *England*, called *A dialogue between the archbiſhop of* Canterbury *and Mr.* Higgins, which we ordered to be burnt by the common hangman, as it well deſerved, though we have no more to do with his grace * of *Canterbury*, than you have with the archbiſhop of *Dublin*; nor can you love and reverence your prelate more than we do ours, whom you tamely ſuffer to be abuſed openly, and by name, by that paultry raſcal of an *obſervator*; and lately upon an affair wherein he had no concern; I mean the buſineſs of the *miſſionary* of *Drogheda*, wherein our excellent *primate* was engaged, and did nothing but according to law and diſcretion. But becauſe the lord archbiſhop † of *Dublin* hath been upon ſeveral occaſions, of late years, miſrepreſented in *England*, I would willingly ſet you right in his character. For his great ſufferings and eminent ſer-

* Dr. *Thomas Teniſon.* † Dr. *William King.*

vices

vices he was by the late king promoted to the ſee of *Derry*. About the ſame time he wrote a book to juſtify the revolution, wherein was an account of king *James*'s proceedings in *Ireland*; and the late archbiſhop *Tillotſon* recommended it to the king as the moſt ſerviceable treatiſe, that could have been publiſhed at ſuch a juncture. And as his grace ſet out upon thoſe principles, he has proceeded ſo ever ſince, as a loyal ſubject to the queen, entirely for the ſucceſſion in the proteſtant line, and for ever excluding the *pretender*; and though a firm friend to the church, yet with indulgence towards diſſenters, as appears from his conduct at *Derry*, where he was ſettled for many years among the moſt virulent of the ſect, yet upon his removal to *Dublin*, they parted from him with tears in their eyes, and univerſal acknowledgments of his wiſdom and goodneſs. For the reſt, it muſt be owned, he does not buſy himſelf by entering deep into any party, but rather ſpends his time in acts of hoſpitality and charity, in building of churches, repairing his palace, in introducing and prefering the worthieſt

perſons he can find, without other regards: in ſhort, in the practice of all virtues, that can become a publick or private life. This and more, if poſſible, is due to ſo excellent a perſon, who may be juſtly reckoned among the greateſt and moſt learned prelates of this age, however his character may be defiled by ſuch mean and dirty hands as thoſe of the *obſervator*, or ſuch as employ him.]

I now come to anſwer the other part of your letter, and ſhall give you my opinion freely about repealing the *ſacramental teſt*; only whereas you deſire my thoughts as a friend, and not as I am a member of parliament, I muſt aſſure you they are exactly the ſame in both capacities.

I muſt begin by telling you, we are generally ſurprized at your wonderful kindneſs to us on this occaſion, in being ſo very induſtrious to teach us to ſee our intereſts in a point, where we are ſo unable to ſee it ourſelves. This hath given us ſome ſuſpicion; and though in my own particular I am hugely bent to believe, that whenever you concern your-

ſelves

ſelves in our affairs, it is certainly *for our good*, yet I have the misfortune to be ſomething ſingular in this belief, and therefore I never attempt to juſtify it, but content myſelf to poſſeſs my own opinion in private, for fear of encountering men of more wit or words, than I have to ſpare.

We at this diſtance, who ſee nothing of the ſpring of actions, are forced by meer conjecture to aſſign two reaſons for your deſiring us to repeal the *ſacramental teſt*; one is, becauſe you are ſaid to imagine it will be a ſtep towards the like *good work in England*. The other more immediate, that it will open a way for rewarding *ſeveral perſons*, who have well deſerved upon a *great occaſion*, but who are now unqualified through that impediment.

I do not frequently quote poets, eſpecially *Engliſh*: but I remember there is in ſome of Mr. *Cowley*'s love verſes a ſtrain, that I thought extraordinary at fifteen, and have often ſince imagined it to be ſpoken by *Ireland*,

Forbid it, heaven, my life ſhould be
Weigh'd with her leaſt conveniency.

In ſhort, whatever advantage you propoſe to yourſelves by repealing the *ſacramental teſt*, ſpeak it out plainly, it is the beſt argument you can uſe, for we value your intereſt much more than our own; if your little finger be ſore, and you think a poultice made of our *vitals* will give it any eaſe, ſpeak the word, and it ſhall be done: the intereſt of our whole kingdom is at any time ready to ſtrike to that of your pooreſt *fiſhing towns*; it is hard you will not accept our ſervices, unleſs we believe at the ſame time, that you are only conſulting our profit, and giving us marks of your love. If there be a fire at ſome diſtance, and I immediately blow up my houſe before there be occaſion, becauſe you are a man of quality, and apprehend ſome danger to a *corner of your ſtable*; yet why ſhould you require me to attend next morning at your levee, with my humble thanks for the favour you have done me?

If we might be allowed to judge for our-

ourſelves, we had abundance of benefit by the *ſacramental teſt*, and foreſee a number of miſchiefs would be the conſequence of repealing it; and we conceive the objections made againſt it by the *diſſenters* are of no manner of force. They tell us of their merits in the late war in *Ireland*, and how chearfully they engaged for the ſafety of the nation; that if they had thought they had been fighting only other people's quarrels, perhaps it might have cooled their zeal; and that for the future they ſhall ſit down quietly, and let us do our work ourſelves; nay, that it is neceſſary they ſhould do ſo, ſince they cannot take up arms under the penalty of high-treaſon.

Now ſuppoſing them to have done their duty, as I believe they did, and not to trouble them about the * *fly on the wheel*, I thought *liberty*, *property*, and *religion*, had been the three ſubjects of the quarrel; and have not all thoſe been amply ſecured to them? had they at that time a *mental*

* Alluding to the fable of a fly, who having ſettled on the ſpoke of a wheel belonging to a chariot, that was driven rapidly along the road, exulted in his own importance, and cried out "*What a duſt we raiſe!*

reſerva-

reſervation for *power* and *employments*? and muſt theſe two articles be added henceforward in our national quarrels? it is grown a mighty conceit among ſome men, to melt down the phraſe of a *church eſtabliſhed by law*, into that of the *religion of the magiſtrate*; of which appellation it is eaſier to find the reaſon than the ſenſe: if by the *magiſtrate* they mean the *prince*, [the expreſſion includes a falſhood; for when king *James* was *prince*] the eſtabliſhed church was the ſame it is now. If by the ſame word they mean the legiſlature, we deſire no more. But that as it will, we of this kingdom believe the church of *Ireland* to be the national church, and the only one eſtabliſhed by law, and are willing by the ſame law to give a *toleration* to diſſenters; but if once we repeal our *ſacramental teſt*, and grant a *toleration*, or ſuſpend the execution of the penal laws, I do not ſee how we can be ſaid to have any eſtabliſhed church remaining; or rather, why there will not be as many eſtabliſhed churches, as there are ſects of diſſenters. No, ſay they, yours will ſtill be the national church, be-

becauſe your biſhops and clergy are maintained by the publick: but, *that* I ſuppoſe will be of no long duration, and it would be very unjuſt it ſhould, becauſe, to ſpeak in *Tindal*'s phraſe, it is not reaſonable that revenues ſhould be annexed to one opinion more than another, when all are equally lawful; and it is the ſame author's maxim, that no free-born ſubject ought to pay for maintaining ſpeculations he does not believe. *But why ſhould any man, upon account of opinions he cannot help, be deprived the opportunity of ſerving his queen and country!* their zeal is commendable, and when employments go a begging for want of hands, they ſhall be ſure to have the refuſal, only upon condition they will not pretend to them upon maxims, which equally include *atheiſts*, *turks*, *jews*, *infidels*, and *hereticks*; or, which is ſtill more dangerous, even *papiſts* themſelves: the former you allow, the other you deny; becauſe theſe laſt own a foreign power, and therefore muſt be ſhut out. But there is no great weight in this; for their religion can ſuit with free ſtates, with limited or abſolute monarchies,

narchies, as well as a better; and the *pope*'s power in *France* is but a ſhadow; ſo that upon this foot there need be no great danger to the conſtitution by admitting *papiſts* to employments. I will help you to enough of them ſhall be ready to allow the *pope* as little power here as you pleaſe; and the bare opinion of his being vicar of Chriſt is but a *ſpeculative point*, for which no man it ſeems ought to be deprived the capacity of ſerving his country.

But, if you pleaſe, I will tell you the great objection we have againſt repealing this ſame *ſacramental teſt*. It is, that we are verily perſuaded, the conſequence will be an entire alteration of religion among us in no great compaſs of years. And pray, obſerve how we reaſon here in *Ireland* upon this matter.

We obſerve the *Scots* in our northern parts to be a brave induſtrious people, extremely devoted to their religion, and full of an *undiſturbed* affection towards each other. Numbers of that noble nation, invited by the fertilities of the ſoil, are glad to exchange their barren hills of

Loqua-

Loquabar by a voyage of three hours, for our fruitful vales of *Doun* and *Antrim*, ſo productive of that *grain*, which at little trouble and leſs expence finds diet and lodging for themſelves and their cattle. Theſe people, by their extreme parſimony, wonderful *dexterity in dealing*, and firm adherence to one-another, ſoon grow into wealth from the *ſmalleſt beginnings*, never are rooted out where they once fix, and increaſe daily by new ſupplies: beſides, when they are the ſuperior number in any tract of ground, they are not *over patient of mixture*; but ſuch, whom they cannot *aſſimulate*, ſoon find it their intereſt to remove. I have done all in my power on ſome land of my own to preſerve two or three *Engliſh* fellows in their neighbourhood, but found it impoſſible, though one of them thought he had ſufficiently made his court by turning preſbyterian. Add to all this, that they bring along with them from *Scotland* a moſt formidable notion of our church, which they look upon at leaſt three degrees worſe than popery: and it is natural it ſhould be ſo, ſince they come over full fraught

fraught with that ſpirit, which taught them to aboliſh epiſcopacy at home.

Then we proceed farther, and obſerve, that the gentlemen of employments here make a very conſiderable number in the houſe of commons, and have no *other merit*, but that of doing their duty in their ſeveral ſtations; therefore when the teſt is repealed, it will be highly reaſonable they ſhould give pleaſe to thoſe, who have much *greater ſervices* to plead. The commiſſions of the revenue are ſoon diſpoſed of, and the collectors and other officers throughout the kingdom are generally appointed by the commiſſioners, which gives them a mighty influence in every county. As much may be ſaid of the great offices in the law; and when this door is open to let diſſenters into the commiſſions of the peace, to make them high-ſheriffs, mayors of corporations, and officers of the army and militia, I do not ſee how it can be otherwiſe, conſidering their induſtry and our ſupineneſs, but that they may, in a very few years, grow to a majority in the houſe of commons, and conſequently make themſelves the national

nal religion, and have a fair pretence to demand the revenues of the church for their teachers. I know it will be objected, that if all this ſhould happen as I deſcribe, yet the preſbyterian religion could never be made the national by act of parliament, becauſe our biſhops are ſo great a number in the houſe of lords; and without a majority there, the church could not be aboliſhed. But I have *two very good expedients* for that, which I ſhall leave you to gueſs, and I dare ſwear our ſpeaker here has often thought on, eſpecially having endeavoured at *one of them* ſo lately. To convince you, that this deſign is not ſo foreign from *ſome people's* thoughts, I muſt let you know, that an honeſt *bell-weather* † of our houſe (you have him now in *England*, I wiſh you could keep him there) had the impudence, ſome years ago, in parliament-time, to ſhake my lord biſhop of *Kilaloo* * by his lawn-ſleeve, and tell him, in a threatning manner, *that he hoped to live to ſee the day,*

† Suppoſed to be Mr. *Broderick.* * Dr. *Lindſay*, afterwards lord primate.

when

when there ſhould not be one of his order in the kingdom.

Theſe laſt lines perhaps you think a digreſſion; therefore to return, I have told you the conſequences we fully reckon upon from repealing the *ſacramental teſt*, which although the greateſt number of ſuch as are for doing it, are actually in no manner of pain about it, and many of them care not three-pence whether there be any *church*, or no; yet becauſe they pretend to argue from conſcience, as well as policy and intereſt, I thought it proper to underſtand and anſwer them accordingly.

Now, ſir, in anſwer to your queſtion, whether if any attempt ſhould be made here for repealing the *ſacramental teſt*, it would be likely to ſucceed? the number of profeſſed diſſenters in this parliament was, as I remember, ſomething under a dozen, and I cannot call to mind above thirty others, who were expected to fall in with them. This is certain, that the preſbyterian party having with great induſtry muſtered up their forces, did endeavour

one

one day, upon occaſion of a hint in my lord * *Pembroke*'s ſpeech, to introduce a debate about repealing the *teſt clauſe*, when there appeared at leaſt four to one odds againſt them; and the ableſt of thoſe, who were reckoned the moſt ſtanch and thorough-paced *whigs* upon all other occaſions, fell off with an abhorrence at the firſt mention of this.

I muſt deſire you to take notice, that the terms of *whig* and *tory* do not properly expreſs the different intereſts in our parliament. [I remember, when I was laſt in *England*, I told the king, that the higheſt tories we had with us would make tolerable whigs there: this was certainly right, and ſtill in the general continues ſo, unleſs you have ſince admitted new characteriſticks, which did not come within our definition.] Whoever bears a true veneration for the glorious memory of king *William*, as our great deliverer from popery and ſlavery; whoever is firmly loyal to our preſent queen with an utter abhorrence and deteſtation of the pretender; whoever ap-

* Then lord lieutenant of *Ireland*.

proves the ſucceſſion to the crown in the houſe of *Hanover*, and is for preſerving the doctrine and diſcipline of the church of *England*, with an *indulgence* for ſcrupulous conſciences; ſuch a man we think acts upon right principles, and may be juſtly allowed a *whig*: and I believe there are not ſix members in our houſe of commons, who may not fairly come under this deſcription. So that the parties among us are made up on one ſide of *moderate whigs*, and on the other of *preſbyterians* and their *abettors*, by which laſt I mean ſuch, who can equally go to a *church* or *conventicle*, or ſuch who are indifferent to all religion in general; or laſtly, ſuch who affect to bear a perſonal rancour towards the clergy: theſe laſt are a ſett of men not of our own growth, their principles at leaſt have been *imported* of late years; yet this whole party put together will ſcarce, I am confident, amount to above fifty men in parliament, which can hardly be worked up into a majority of three hundred.

As to the houſe of lords, the difficulty there is conceived at leaſt as great as in ours.

ours. So many of our temporal peers live in *England*, that the biſhops are generally pretty near a *par* of the houſe, and we reckon they will be all to a man againſt repealing the *teſt*; and yet their lordſhips are generally thought as good whigs upon our principles as any in the kingdom. There are indeed a few lay-lords, who appear to have no great devotion for epiſcopacy; and perhaps one or two more, with whom *certain powerful motives* might be uſed for removing any difficulty whatſoever: but theſe are, in no ſort, a number to carry any point againſt a conjunction of the reſt and the whole bench of biſhops.

Beſides, the whole body of our clergy is utterly againſt repealing the *teſt*, though they are entirely devoted to her majeſty, and hardly one in an hundred, who are not very good *whigs* in our acceptation of the word. And I muſt let you know, that we of *Ireland* are not yet come up to *other folks refinements*, for we generally love and eſteem our clergy, and think they deſerve it; nay, we are apt to lay ſome weight upon their opinion, and

would not willingly diſoblige them, at leaſt, unleſs it were upon ſome greater point of intereſt than this. And their judgment in the preſent affair is the more to be regarded, becauſe they are the laſt perſons, who will be affected by it: this makes us think them impartial, and that their concern is only for religion and the intereſt of the kingdom. Becauſe the act, which repeals the *teſt*, will only qualify a *layman* for an employment, but not a *preſbyterian* or *anabaptiſt* preacher for a church-living. Now I muſt take leave to inform you, that ſeveral members of our houſe, and myſelf among the reſt, knowing ſome time ago what was upon the anvil, went to all the clergy we knew of any diſtinction, and deſired their judgment in the matter; wherein we found a moſt wonderful agreement, there being but *one divine* that we could hear of in the whole kingdom, who appeared of a contrary ſentiment, wherein he afterwards ſtood alone in the *convocation*, very little to his *credit*, though, as he hoped, very much to his *intereſt*.

I will now conſider a little the arguments

:nts offered to ſhew the advantages, or
her the neceſſity of repealing the *teſt* in
:land. We are told, the popiſh intereſt
ıere ſo formidable, that all hands ſhould
joined to keep it under; that the only
mes of diſtinction among us ought to
thoſe of *proteſtant* and *papiſt*; and that
s expedient is the only means to *unite*
proteſtants upon one common bottom.
l which is nothing but miſrepreſentati-
and miſtake.

If we were under any real fear of the
piſts in this kingdom, it would be hard
think us ſo ſtupid, as not to be equal-
apprehenſive with *others*, ſince we are
ely to be the greateſt, and more imme-
ıte ſufferers: but on the contrary, we
ɔk upon them to be altogether as in-
nſiderable as the women and children.
ıeir lands are almoſt entirely taken from
:m, and they are rendered uncapable
purchaſing any more; and for the lit-
: that remains, proviſion is made by the
:e act againſt popery, that it will daily
umble away: to prevent which, ſome
the moſt conſiderable among them are
:eady turned proteſtants, and ſo in all

probability will many more. Then, the popiſh prieſts are all regiſtered, and without permiſſion (which I hope will not be granted) they can have no ſucceſſors; ſo that the proteſtant clergy will find it perhaps no difficult matter to bring great numbers over to the church; and in the mean time the common people, without leaders, without diſcipline, or natural courage, being little better than *hewers of wood, and drawers of water*, are out of all capacity of doing any miſchief, if they were ever ſo well inclined. Neither are they at all likely to join in any conſiderable numbers with an *invader*, having found ſo ill ſucceſs when they were much more numerous and powerful; when they had a prince of their own religion to head them, had been trained for ſome years under a *popiſh deputy*, and received ſuch mighty aids from the *French* king.

As to that argument uſed for repealing the *teſt*, that it will unite all proteſtants againſt the *common enemy*; I wonder by

* In the reign of king *James* II. and till after the battle of the *Boyne* in 1690.

what

what figure thoſe gentlemen ſpeak, who are pleaſed to advance it: ſuppoſe, in order to increaſe the friendſhip between you and me, a law ſhould paſs, that I muſt have half your eſtate; do you think that would much advance the union between us? or ſuppoſe I ſhare my fortune equally between my own *children* and a *ſtranger*, whom I take into my protection; will that be a method to unite them? it is an odd way of uniting parties, to deprive a *majority* of part of their ancient right, by conferring it on a *faction*, who had never any right at all, and therefore cannot be ſaid to ſuffer any loſs or injury, if it be refuſed them. Neither is it very clear, how far ſome people may ſtretch the term of *common enemy*. How many are there of thoſe that call themſelves proteſtants, who look upon our worſhip to be idolatrous as well as that of the papiſts, and with great charity put *prelacy* and *popery* together as terms convertible?

And therefore there is one ſmall doubt I would be willingly ſatisfied in, before I agree to the repealing of the *teſt*; that is,

whether theſe ſame *proteſtants*, when they have by their dexterity made themſelves the national religion, and diſpoſed the church revenues among their *paſtors* or *themſelves*, will be ſo kind to allow *us diſſenters*, I do not ſay a ſhare in employments, but a bare *toleration* by law? the reaſon of my doubt is, becauſe I have been ſo very idle as to read above fifty pamphlets written by as many preſbyterian divines, loudly diſclaiming this idol *toleration*, ſome of them calling it (I know not how properly) a *rag of popery*, and all agreeing it was to *eſtabliſh iniquity by a law*. Now I would be glad to know, when and where *their ſucceſſors* have renounced this doctrine, and before what witneſſes. Becauſe, methinks I ſhould be loth to ſee my poor titular biſhop *in partibus* ſeized on by miſtake in the dark for a jeſuit, or be forced myſelf to keep a chaplain diſguiſed like my butler, and ſteal to prayers in a back room, as my grandfather uſed in thoſe times, when the church of *England* was *malignant*.

But this is ripping up old quarrels long forgot; popery is now the *common enemy*,

againſt which we muſt all unite: I have been tired in hiſtory with the perpetual folly of thoſe ſtates, who call in foreigners to aſſiſt them againſt a *common enemy*: but the miſchief was, theſe *allies* would never be brought to allow, that the common enemy was quite ſubdued. And they had reaſon; for it proved at laſt, that one part of the common enemy was thoſe who called them in, and ſo the *allies* became at length the *maſters*.

It is agreed among naturaliſts, that a *lion* is a larger, a ſtronger, and more dangerous enemy than a *cat*; yet if a man were to have his choice, either a *lion* at his foot, bound faſt with three or four chains, his teeth drawn out, and his claws pared to the quick, or an angry *cat* in full liberty at his throat; he would take no long time to determine.

I have been ſometimes admiring the wonderful ſignificancy of that word *perſecution*, and what various interpretations it hath acquired even within my memory. When I was a boy, I often heard the preſbyterians complain, that they were not permitted to ſerve God in their own way;

way; they ſaid they did not repine at our employments, but thought that all men who live peaceably ought to have liberty of conſcience, and leave to aſſemble. That impediment being removed at the revolution, they ſoon learned to ſwallow the *ſacramental teſt*, and began to take very large ſteps, wherein all who offered to oppoſe them, were called men of a *perſecuting ſpirit*. During the time the bill againſt occaſional conformity was on foot, *perſecution* was every day rung in our ears, and now at laſt the *ſacramental teſt* itſelf has the ſame name. Where then is this matter likely to end, when the obtaining of one requeſt is only uſed as a ſtep to demand another? a lover is ever complaining of *cruelty*, while any thing is denied him; and when the lady ceaſes to be *cruel*, ſhe is from the next moment at his mercy: ſo *perſecution*, it ſeems, is every thing, that will not leave it in mens power to *perſecute others*.

There is one argument offered againſt a *ſacramental teſt* by a ſort of men, who are content to be ſtiled of the church of *England*, who perhaps attend its ſervice

in the morning, and go with their wives to a *conventicle* in the afternoon, confeſſing they hear very good doctrine in both. Theſe men are much offended, that ſo holy an inſtitution, as that of the Lord's ſupper, ſhould be made ſubſervient to ſuch mercenary purpoſes as the getting of an employment. Now it ſeems, the law, concluding all men to be members of that church where they receive the ſacrament; and ſuppoſing all men to live like chriſtians (eſpecially thoſe who are to have employments) did imagine they received the ſacrament in courſe about four times a year; and therefore only deſired it might appear by certificate to the publick, that ſuch, who took an office, were members of the church eſtabliſhed, by doing their ordinary duty. However, *leaſt we ſhould offend them*, we have often deſired they would deal candidly with us: for if the matter ſtuck only there, we would propoſe it in parliament, that every man, who takes an employment, ſhould, inſtead of receiving the ſacrament, be obliged to ſwear, that he is a member of the church of *Ireland* by law eſtabliſhed, with

with epiſcopacy, *and ſo forth*; and as they do now in *Scotland*, *to be true to the kirk*. But when we drive them thus far, they always retire to the main body of the argument, urge the hardſhip that men ſhould be deprived the liberty of ſerving their queen and country on account of their conſcience: and in ſhort, have recourſe to the common ſtile of their half-brethren. Now whether this be a ſincere way of arguing, I will appeal to any other judgment but theirs.

There is another topick of clamour ſomewhat parallel to the foregoing: it ſeems by the teſt-clauſe, the *military* officers are obliged to receive the ſacrament, as well as the *civil*. And it is a matter of ſome patience, to hear the diſſenters declaiming upon this occaſion: they cry they are *diſarmed*, they are uſed like papiſts: when an enemy appears at home, or from abroad, they muſt ſit ſtill, and ſee their throats cut, or be hanged for high-treaſon if they offer to defend themſelves. Miſerable condition! woful dilemma! it is happy for us all, that the pretender was not appriſed of this *paſſive*

preſbyterian principle, elſe he would have infallibly landed in our *northern* parts, and found them all ſat down in their formalities, as the *Gauls* did the *Roman* ſenators, ready to die with honour in their callings. Sometimes to appeaſe their indignation, we venture to give them hopes, that in ſuch a caſe the government will perhaps connive, and hardly be ſo ſevere to hang them for defending it againſt the letter of the law; to which they readily anſwer, that they will not lie at our mercy, but let us fight our battles ourſelves. Sometimes we offer to get an act, by which, upon all *popiſh* inſurrections at home, or *popiſh* invaſions from abroad, the government ſhall be impowered to grant commiſſions to all proteſtants whatſoever, without that *perſecuting* circumſtance of obliging them to *ſay their prayers* when they receive the ſacrament: but they abhor all thoughts of *occaſional* commiſſions; they will not do our drudgery, and we reap the benefit: it is not worth their while to fight *pro aris et focis*; and they had rather loſe their eſtates, liberties, religion,

religion, and lives, than the pleaſure of *governing*.

But to bring this diſcourſe towards a concluſion: if the diſſenters will be ſatisfied with ſuch a *toleration* by law, as hath been granted them in *England*, I believe the majority of both houſes will fall readily in with it; farther it will be hard to perſuade this houſe of commons, and perhaps much harder the next. For, to ſay the truth, we make a mighty difference here between ſuffering *thiſtles* to grow among us, and wearing them for *poſies*. We are fully convinced in our conſciences, that *we* ſhall always *tolerate them*; but not quite ſo fully that *they* will always *tolerate us*, when it comes to their turn; and *we* are the majority, and *we* are in poſſeſſion.

He who argues in defence of a law in force, not antiquated or obſolete, but lately enacted, is certainly on the ſafer ſide, and may be allowed to point out the dangers he conceives to foreſee in the abrogation of it.

For, if the conſequences of repealing this clauſe ſhould at ſome time or other enable

able the preſbyterians to work themſelves up into the national church; inſtead of *uniting* proteſtants, it would ſow eternal diviſions among them. Firſt, their own ſects, which now lie dormant, would be ſoon at cuffs *again* with each other about power and preferment; and the *diſſenting epiſcopals*, perhaps diſcontented to ſuch a degree, as upon ſome *fair unhappy* occaſion, would be able to ſhake the firmeſt loyalty, which none can deny theirs to be.

Neither is it very difficult to conjecture, from ſome late proceedings, at what a rate this *faction* is like to drive, whereever it gets the *whip* and the *ſeat*. They have already ſet up courts of ſpiritual judicature in open contempt of the laws: they ſend *miſſionaries* every where, without being invited, in order to convert the *church of England* folks to *chriſtianity*. They are as vigilant as *I know who*, to attend perſons on their death-beds, and for purpoſes much alike. And what practices ſuch principles as theſe (with many other that might be invidious to mention) may ſpawn,

ſpawn, when they are *laid out to the ſun*, you may determine at leiſure.

Laſtly, Whether we are ſo entirely ſure of their loyalty upon the preſent foot of government as you may imagine, their detractors make a queſtion, which however does, I think, by no means affect the body of diſſenters; but the inſtance produced is of ſome among their leading teachers in the north, who having refuſed the *abduration oath*, yet continue their preaching, and have abundance of followers. The particulars are out of my head; but the fact is notorious enough, and I believe hath been publiſhed; I think it a pity, it hath not been *remedied*.

Thus I have fairly given you, ſir, my own opinion, as well as that of a great majority in both houſes here, relating to this weighty affair; upon which I am confident you may ſecurely reckon. I will leave you to make what uſe of it you pleaſe.

I am, with great reſpect,

Sir,

Dublin, Dec. 4, 1708.

Yours, &c.

A TRI-

A

CRITICAL ESSAY

UPON THE

FACULTIES OF THE MIND.

To ——

SIR,

BEING ſo great a lover of antiquities, it was reaſonable to ſuppoſe, you would be very much obliged with any thing, that was new. I have been of late offended with many writers of eſſays and moral diſcourſes for running into ſtale topicks and thread-bare quotations, and not handling their ſubject fully and cloſely: all which errors I have carefully avoided in the following eſſay, which I have propoſed as a pattern for young writers to imitate. The thoughts and obſervations being entirely new, the quotations untouched by others, the ſubject of mighty importance, and treated with much order and perſpicuity, it hath coſt me a great deal of time; and I deſire you will accept and conſider it as the utmoſt effort of my genius.

PHiloſophers ſay, that man is a microcoſm, or little world, reſembling in miniature every part of the great: and, in my opinion, the body natural may be compared to the body politick: and if this be ſo, how can the *Epicurean*'s opinion be true, that the univerſe was formed by a fortuitous concourſe of atoms; which I will no more believe, than that the accidental jumbling of the letters of the alphabet could fall by chance into a moſt ingenious and learned treatiſe of philoſophy. *Riſum teneatis amici?* [HOR.] This falſe opinion muſt needs create many more; it is like an error in the firſt concoction, which cannot be corrected in the ſecond; the foundation is weak, and whatever ſuperſtructure you raiſe upon it, muſt of neceſſity fall to the ground. Thus men are led from one error to another, until with *Ixion* they embrace a cloud inſtead of *Juno*; or like the dog in the fable, loſe the ſubſtance in gaping at the ſhadow. For ſuch opinions cannot cohere; but like the iron and clay in the toes of *Nebuchadnezzar*'s image, muſt ſeparate and break in pieces. I have read in a certain author, that

that *Alexander* wept, becauſe he had no more worlds to conquer; which he needed not have done, if the fortuitous concourſe of atoms could create one: but this is an opinion fitter for that many-headed beaſt the vulgar to entertain, than for ſo wiſe a man as *Epicurus*; the corrupt part of his ſect only borrowed his name, as the monkey did the cat's claw to draw the cheſnut out of the fire.

However, the firſt ſtep to the cure is to know the diſeaſe; and though truth may be difficult to find, becauſe, as the philoſopher obſerves, ſhe lives in the bottom of a well, yet we need not, like blind men, grope in open day-light. I hope I may be allowed among ſo many far more learned men to offer my mite, ſince a ſtander-by may ſometimes perhaps ſee more of the game, than he that plays it. But I do not think a philoſopher obliged to account for every phænomenon in nature, or drown himſelf with *Ariſtotle*, for not being able to ſolve the ebbing and flowing of the tide, in that fatal ſentence he paſt upon himſelf, *Quia te non capio, tu capies me.* Wherein he was at once the

judge and the criminal, the accuſer and executioner. *Socrates* on the other hand, who ſaid he knew nothing, was pronounced by the oracle to be the wiſeſt man in the world.

But to return from this digreſſion, I think it as clear as any demonſtration in *Euclid*, that nature does nothing in vain; if we were able to dive into her ſecret receſſes, we ſhould find that the ſmalleſt blade of graſs, or moſt contemptible weed, has its particular uſe; but ſhe is chiefly admirable in her minuteſt compoſitions, the leaſt and moſt contemptible inſect moſt diſcovers the art of nature, if I may ſo call it, though nature, which delights in variety, will always triumph over art: and as the poet obſerves,

Naturam expellas furca licet, uſque recurret. HOR.

But the various opinions of philoſophers have ſcattered through the world as many plagues of the mind, as *Pandora*'s box did thoſe of the body, only with this differ-

difference, that they have not left hope at the bottom. And if truth be not fled with *Aſtrea*, ſhe is certainly as hidden as the ſource of *Nile*, and can be found only in *Utopia*. Not that I would reflect on thoſe wiſe ſages, which would be a ſort of ingratitude; and he that calls a man ungrateful, ſums up all the evil that a man can be guilty of,

Ingratum ſi dixeris, omnia dicis.

But what I blame the philoſophers for (though ſome may think it a paradox) is chiefly their pride; nothing leſs than an *ipſe dixit*, and you muſt pin your faith on their ſleeve. And though *Diogenes* lived in a tub, there might be, for aught I know, as much pride under his rags, as in the fine ſpun garment of the divine *Plato*. It is reported of this *Diogenes*, that when *Alexander* came to ſee him, and promiſed to give him whatever he would aſk, the *cynick* only anſwered, *Take not from me what thou canſt not give me, but ſtand from between me and the light*; which was almoſt as extravagant as the philoſo-

pher, that flung his money into the ſea, with this remarkable ſaying ——

How different was this man from the uſurer, who being told his ſon would ſpend all he had got, replied, *He cannot take more pleaſure in ſpending, than I did in getting it.* Theſe men could ſee the faults of each other, but not their own; thoſe they flung into the bag behind; * *non videmus id manticæ quod in tergo eſt.* I may perhaps be cenſured for my free opinions by thoſe carping momus's, whom authors worſhip as the *Indians* do the devil, for fear. They will endeavour to give my reputation as many wounds as the man in the almanack; but I value it not; and perhaps like flies, they may buz ſo often about the candle, till they burn their wings. They muſt pardon me, if I venture to give them this advice, not to rail at what they cannot underſtand: it does but diſcover that ſelf-tormenting paſſion of envy, than which the greateſt

* Alluding to the fable of *Phædrus*, that *Jupiter* had hung over every man's ſhoulder two ſatchels, of which one hung before, and contained the faults of his neighbours; and the other behind, which contained his own.

tyrant

tyrant never invented a more cruel torment.

Invidia Siculi non invenere Tyranni
Tormentum majus— JUV.

I muſt be ſo bold to tell my criticks and witlings, that they can no more judge of this, than a man that is born blind can have any true idea of colours. I have always obſerved, that your empty veſſels ſound loudeſt: I value their laſhes as little as the ſea did thoſe of *Xerxes*, when he whipped it †. The utmoſt favour a man can expect from them is, that which *Polyphemus* promiſed *Ulyſſes*, that he would devour him the laſt: they think to ſubdue a writer, as *Cæſar* did his enemy, with a *Veni, vidi, vici.* I confeſs I value the opinion of the judicious few, a *Rymer*, a *Dennis*, or a *W——k*; but for the reſt, to give my judgment at once, I think the long diſpute among the philoſophers about a *vacuum* may be determined in the affirmative, that it is to be found

† It is told of *Xerxes*, that when the ſea broke down the bridge of boats, which he had laid over the *Helleſpont*, he ordered it to be laſhed, and fetters to be thrown into it.

in a critick's head. They are at beſt but the drones of the learned world, who devour the honey, and will not work themſelves; and a writer need no more regard them, than the moon does the barking of a little ſenſeleſs cur. For, in ſpight of their terrible roaring, you may with half an eye diſcover the *aſs* under the *lion*'s ſkin.

But to return to our diſcourſe: *Demoſthenes* being aſked what was the firſt part of an orator, replied, *action:* what was the ſecond, *action:* what was the third, *action:* and ſo on *ad infinitum.* This may be true in oratory; but contemplation in other things exceeds action. And therefore a wiſe man is never leſs alone, than when he is alone:

Nunquam minus ſolus, quam cum ſolus.

And *Archimedes*, the famous mathematician, was ſo intent upon his problems, that he never minded the ſoldier who came to kill him. Therefore not to detract from the juſt praiſe which belongs to orators, they ought to conſider that nature, which

which gave us two eyes to ſee, and two ears to hear, has given us but one tongue to ſpeak, wherein however ſome do ſo abound, that the virtuoſi, who have been ſo long in ſearch for the perpetual motion, may infallibly find it there.

Some men admire republicks, becauſe orators flouriſh there moſt, and are the great enemies of tyranny: but my opinion is, that one tyrant is better than a hundred. Beſides, theſe orators inflame the people, whoſe anger is really but a ſhort fit of madneſs,

Ira furor brevis eſt.—— HOR.

After which, laws are like cobwebs, which may catch ſmall flies, but let waſps and hornets break through. But in oratory the greateſt art is to hide art,

Artis eſt celare Artem.

But this muſt be the work of time, we muſt lay hold on all opportunities, and let ſlip no occaſion, elſe we ſhall be forced to weave *Penelope*'s web, unravel in

in the night what we ſpun in the day. And therefore I have obſerved, that time is painted with a lock before, and bald behind, ſignifying thereby, that we muſt take time (as we ſay) by the forelock, for when it is once paſt, there is no recalling it.

The mind of man is at firſt (if you will pardon the expreſſion) like a *tabula raſa*, or like wax, which, while it is ſoft, is capable of any impreſſion, till time has hardened it. And at length death, that grim tyrant, ſtops us in the midſt of our career. The greateſt conquerors have at laſt been conquered by death, which ſpares none, from the ſceptre to the ſpade.

Mors omnibus communis.

All rivers go to the ſea, but none return from it. *Xerxes* wept when he beheld his army, to conſider that in leſs than an hundred years they would be all dead. *Anacreon* was choaked with a grape-ſtone; and violent joy kills as well as violent grief. There is nothing in this world conſtant, but inconſtancy; yet *Plato* thought,

thought, that if virtue would appear to the world in her own native dreſs, all men would be enamoured with her. But now, ſince intereſt governs the world, and men neglect the golden mean, *Jupiter* himſelf, if he came on the earth, would be deſpiſed, unleſs it were, as he did to *Danae*, in a golden ſhower: for men now-a-days worſhip the riſing ſun, and not the ſetting.

Donec eris felix multos numerabis amicos:

Thus have I, in obedience to your commands, ventured to expoſe myſelf to cenſure in this critical age. Whether I have done right to my ſubject, muſt be left to the judgment of the learned reader: however, I cannot but hope, that my attempting of it may be an encouragement for ſome able pen to perform it with more ſucceſs.

PRE-

PREDICTIONS

FOR

The YEAR 1708.

Wherein the month, and day of the month are ſet down, the perſons named, and the great actions and events of next year particularly related, as they will come to paſs.

Written to prevent the people of England *from being farther impoſed on by vulgar almanack-makers.*

By ISAAC BICKERSTAFF, Eſq.

I HAVE long conſidered the groſs abuſe of aſtrology in this kingdom, and upon debating the matter with myſelf, I could not poſſibly lay the fault upon the art, but upon thoſe groſs impoſtors, who ſet up to be the artiſts. I know ſeveral learned men have contended, that the whole is a cheat; that it is abſurd and ridiculous to imagine, the ſtars can have any influence at all upon human actions, thoughts, or inclinations; and whoever hath not bent his ſtudies that way, may be excuſed for thinking ſo, when he ſees in how wretched a manner that noble art is treated by a few mean illiterate traders between

between us and the ſtars; who import a yearly ſtock of nonſenſe, lyes, folly, and impertinence, which they offer to the world as genuine from the planets, though they deſcend from no greater a heighth than their own brains.

I intend in a ſhort time to publiſh a large and rational defence of this art, and therefore ſhall ſay no more in its juſtification at preſent, than that it hath been in all ages defended by many learned men, and among the reſt by *Socrates* himſelf, whom I look upon as undoubtedly the wiſeſt of uninſpired mortals: to which if we add, that thoſe who have condemned this art, though otherwiſe learned, having been ſuch as either did not apply their ſtudies this way, or at leaſt did not ſucceed in their applications; their teſtimony will not be of much weight to its diſadvantage, ſince they are liable to the common objection of condemning what they did not underſtand.

Nor am I at all offended, or do I think it an injury to the art, when I ſee the common dealers in it, the *ſtudents in aſtrology*, the *philomaths*, and the reſt of that tribe, treat-

treated by wiſe men with the utmoſt ſcorn and contempt; but I rather wonder, when I obſerve gentlemen in the country, rich enough to ſerve the nation in parliament, poring in *Patridge*'s almanack to find out the events of the year at home and abroad; not daring to propoſe a hunting-match, till *Gadbury* or he have fixed the weather.

I will allow either of the two I have mentioned, or any other of the fraternity, to be not only aſtrologers, but conjurers too, if I do not produce a hundred inſtances in all their almanacks to convince any reaſonable man, that they do not ſo much as underſtand common grammar and ſyntax; that they are not able to ſpell any word out of the uſual road, nor even in their prefaces to write common ſenſe or intelligible *Engliſh*. Then for their obſervations and predictions, they are ſuch as will equally ſuit any age or country in the world. *This month a certain great perſon will be threatened with death or ſickneſs.* This the news-papers will tell them; for there we find at the end of the year, that no month paſſes

without the death of ſome perſon of note; and it would be hard, if it ſhould be otherwiſe, when there are at leaſt two thouſand perſons of note in this kingdom, many of them old, and the almanack-maker has the liberty of chuſing the ſickelieſt ſeaſon of the year, where he may fix his prediction. Again, *this month an eminent clergyman will be preferred*; of which there may be ſome hundreds, half of them with one foot in the grave. Then, *ſuch a planet in ſuch a houſe ſhews great machinations, plots and conſpiracies, that may in time be brought to light:* after which, if we hear of any diſcovery, the aſtrologer gets the honour; if not, his predictions ſtill ſtands good. And at laſt, *God preſerve king* William *from all his open and ſecret enemies, amen.* When if the king ſhould happen to have died, the aſtrologer plainly foretold it; otherwiſe it paſſeth but for the pious ejaculation of a loyal ſubject: though it unluckily happened in ſome of their almanacks, that poor king *William* was prayed for many months after he was dead, becauſe it fell out,

out, that he died about the beginning of the year.

To mention no more of their impertinent predictions, what have we to do with their advertiſements about *pills and drink for the venereal diſeaſe?* or their mutual quarrels in verſe and proſe of *whig* and *tory*, wherewith the ſtars have little to do?

Having long obſerved and lamented theſe, and a hundred other abuſes of this art too tedious to repeat, I reſolved to proceed in a new way, which I doubt not will be to the general ſatisfaction of the kingdom: I can this year produce but a ſpecimen of what I deſign for the future; having employed moſt part of my time in adjuſting and correcting the calculations I made ſome years paſt, becauſe I would offer nothing to the world, of which I am not as fully ſatisfied, as that I am now alive. For theſe two laſt years I have not failed in above one or two particulars, and thoſe of no very great moment. I exactly foretold the miſcarriage at *Toulon*, with all its particulars; and the loſs of admiral *Shovel*, though I

was

was miſtaken as to the day, placing that accident about thirty ſix hours ſooner than it happened; but upon reviewing my ſchemes, I quickly found the cauſe of that error. I likewiſe foretold the battle of *Almanza* to the very day and hour, with the loſs on both ſides, and the conſequences thereof. All which I ſhewed to ſome friends many months before they happened, that is, I gave them papers ſealed up, to open at ſuch a time, after which they were at liberty to read them; and there they found my predictions true in every article, except one or two very minute.

As for the few following predictions I now offer the world, I forbore to publiſh them, till I had peruſed the ſeveral almanacks for the year we are now entered upon. I found them all in the uſual ſtrain, and I beg the reader will compare their manner with mine: and here I make bold to tell the world, that I lay the whole credit of my art upon the truth of theſe predictions; and I will be content, that *Partridge*, and the reſt of his clan, may hoot me for a cheat and impoſtor, if I

fail in any ſingle particular of moment. I believe, any man who reads this paper, will look upon me to be at leaſt a perſon of as much honeſty and underſtanding, as a common maker of almanacks. I do not lurk in the dark; I am not wholly unknown in the world; I have ſet my name at length, to be a mark of infamy to mankind, if they ſhall find I deceive them.

In one point I muſt deſire to be forgiven, that I talk more ſparingly of home-affairs: as it would be imprudence to diſcover ſecrets of ſtate, ſo it might be dangerous to my perſon; but in ſmaller matters, and ſuch as are not of publick conſequence, I ſhall be very free; and the truth of my conjectures will as much appear from theſe as the other. As for the moſt ſignal events abroad in *France*, *Flanders*, *Italy* and *Spain*, I ſhall make no ſcruple to predict them in plain terms: ſome of them are of importance, and I hope I ſhall ſeldom miſtake the day they will happen; therefore, I think good to inform the reader, that I all along make uſe of the *old ſtyle* obſerved in *England*, which I deſire he will compare with that

of

of the news-papers, at the time they relate the actions I mention.

I muſt add one word more: I know it hath been the opinion of ſeveral learned perſons, who think well enough of the true art of aſtrology, that the ſtars do only *incline*, and not *force* the actions or wills of men: and therefore, however I may proceed by right rules, yet I cannot in prudence ſo confidently aſſure the events will follow exactly as I predict them.

I hope I have maturely conſidered this objection, which in ſome caſes is of no little weight. For example: a man may, by the influence of an over-ruling planet, be diſpoſed or inclined to luſt, rage, or avarice, and yet by the force of reaſon overcome that evil influence; and this was the caſe of *Socrates* *: but the great events of the world uſually depending upon numbers of men, it cannot be expect-

* A phyſiognomiſt being brought by *Socrates*'s ſcholars to examine the features of their maſter, pronounced him, according to the rules of art, paſſionate, intemperate, and libidinous; and when he was reproached and derided by them for a judgment ſo remote from the truth, *Socrates* reſcued him from their inſult by declaring, that his natural diſpoſition was ſuch as had been deſcribed, before it was corrected by the ſtudy of philoſophy.

ed they ſhould all unite to croſs their inclinations, for purſuing a general deſign, wherein they unanimouſly agree. Beſides, the influence of the ſtars reaches to many actions and events, which are not any way in the power of reaſon; as ſickneſs, death, and what we commonly call accidents, with many more needleſs to repeat.

But now it is time to proceed to my predictions, which I have begun to calculate from the time that the *ſun* enters into *Aries*. And this I take to be properly the beginning of the natural year. I purſue them to the time, that he enters *Libra*, or ſomewhat more, which is the buſy period of the year. The remainder I have not yet adjuſted, upon account of ſeveral impediments needleſs here to mention: beſides, I muſt remind the reader again, that this is but a ſpecimen of what I deſign in ſucceeding years to treat more at large, if I may have liberty and encouragement.

My firſt prediction is but a trifle, yet I will mention it, to ſhew how ignorant thoſe ſottiſh pretenders to aſtrology are in

their

their own concerns: it relates to *Partridge* the almanack-maker; I have conſulted the ſtar of his nativity by my own rules, and find he will infallibly die upon the 29th of *March* next, about eleven at night, of a raging fever; therefore I adviſe him to conſider of it, and ſettle his affairs in time.

The month of *April* will be obſervable for the death of many great perſons. On the 4th will die the cardinal *de Noailles*, archbiſhop of *Paris*: on the 11th the young prince of *Aſturias*, ſon to the duke of *Anjou*: on the 14th a great *peer* of this realm will die at his country-houſe: on the 19th an old *layman* of great fame for learning: and on the 23d an eminent goldſmith in *Lombard-ſtreet*. I could mention others, both at home and abroad, if I did not conſider ſuch events of very little uſe or inſtruction to the reader, or to the world.

As to publick affairs: on the 7th of this month there will be an inſurrection in *Dauphine*, occaſioned by the oppreſſions of the people, which will not be quieted in ſome months.

On the 15th will be a violent ſtorm on the ſouth-eaſt coaſt of *France*, which will deſtroy many of their ſhips, and ſome in the very harbour.

The 19th will be famous for the revolt of a whole province or kingdom, excepting one city, by which the affairs of a certain prince in the alliance will take a better face.

May, againſt common conjectures, will be no very buſy month in *Europe*, but very ſignal for the death of the *Dauphin*, which will happen on the 7th, after a ſhort fit of ſickneſs, and grievous torments with the ſtrangury. He dies leſs lamented by the court than the kingdom.

On the 9th a *mareſchal* of *France* will break his leg by a fall from his horſe. I have not been able to diſcover whether he will then die or not.

On the 11th will begin a moſt important ſiege, which the eyes of all *Europe* will be upon: I cannot be more particular: for in relating affairs, that ſo nearly concern the *confederates*, and conſequently this kingdom, I am forced to con-

confine myſelf, for ſeveral reaſons very obvious to the reader.

On the 15th news will arrive of a very *ſurprizing event*, than which nothing could be more unexpected.

On the 19th three noble ladies of this kingdom will, againſt all expectation, prove with child, to the great joy of their huſbands.

On the 23d a famous buffoon of the play-houſe will die a ridiculous death, ſuitable to his vocation.

June. This month will be diſtinguiſhed at home, by the utter diſperſing of thoſe ridiculous deluded enthuſiaſts, commonly called the *prophets*; occaſioned chiefly by ſeeing the time come, when many of their prophecies ſhould be fulfilled, and then finding themſelves deceived by contrary events. It is indeed to be admired, how any deceiver can be ſo weak to foretel things near at hand, when a very few months muſt of neceſſity diſcover the impoſture to all the world; in this point leſs prudent than common almanack-makers, who are ſo wiſe to wander in generals, and talk dubiouſly,

and leave to the reader the buſineſs of interpreting.

On the 1ſt of this month a *French* general will be killed by a random ſhot of a cannon-ball.

On the 6th a fire will break out in the ſuburbs of *Paris*, which will deſtroy above a thouſand houſes; and ſeems to be the foreboding of what will happen, to the ſurprize of all *Europe*, about the end of the following month.

On the 10th a great battle will be fought, which will begin at four of the clock in the afternoon; and laſt till nine at night with great obſtinacy, but no very deciſive event. I ſhall not name the place, for the reaſons aforeſaid; but the commanders on each left wing will be killed.—I ſee bonfires, and hear the noiſe of guns for a victory.

On the 14th there will be a falſe report of the *French* king's death.

On the 20th cardinal *Portocarero* will die of a dyſentery, with great ſuſpicion of poiſon; but the report of his intention to revolt to king *Charles* will prove falſe.

July.

July. The 6th of this month a *certain general* will, by a glorious action, recover the reputation he loſt by former miſfortunes.

On the 12th a *great commander* will die a priſoner in the hands of his enemies.

On the 14th a ſhameful diſcovery will be made of a *French* jeſuit, giving poiſon to a great foreign general; and when he is put to the torture, he will make wonderful diſcoveries.

In ſhort this will prove a month of great action, if I might have liberty to relate the particulars.

At home, the death of an old famous ſenator will happen on the 15th at his country-houſe, worn with age and diſeaſes.

But that which will make this month memorable to all poſterity, is the death of the *French* king, *Lewis* the fourteenth, after a week's ſickneſs at *Marli*, which will happen on the 29th, about ſix o'clock in the evening. It ſeems to be an effect of the gout in his ſtomach, followed by a flux. And in three days after monſieur *Chamil-*

Chamillard will follow his maſter, dying ſuddenly of an apoplexy.

In this month likewiſe an *ambaſſador* will die in *London*; but I cannot aſſign the day.

Auguſt. The affairs of *France* will ſeem to ſuffer no change for a while under the duke of *Burgundy*'s adminiſtration; but the genius that animated the whole machine being gone, will be the cauſe of mighty turns and revolutions in the following year. The new king makes yet little change either in the army or the miniſtry; but the libels againſt his grandfather, that fly about his very court, give him uneaſineſs.

I ſee an expreſs in mighty haſte, with joy and wonder in his looks, arriving by break of day on the 26th of this month, having travelled in three days a prodigious journey by land and ſea. In the evening I hear bells and guns, and ſee the blazing of a thouſand bonfires.

A young admiral of noble birth does likewiſe this month gain immortal honour by a great atchievement.

The

The affairs of *Poland* are this month entirely ſettled: *Auguſtus* reſigns his pretenſions, which he had again taken up for ſome time: *Staniſlaus* is peaceably poſſeſſed of the throne; and the king of *Sweden* declares for the emperor.

I cannot omit one particular accident here at home; that near the end of this month much miſchief will be done at *Bartholomew* fair, by the fall of a booth.

September. This month begins with a very ſurprizing fit of froſty weather, which will laſt near twelve days.

The pope having long languiſhed laſt month, the ſwellings in his legs breaking, and the fleſh mortifying, will die on the 11th inſtant; and in three weeks time, after a mighty conteſt, be ſucceeded by a cardinal of the *imperial* faction, but a native of *Tuſcany*, who is now about ſixty-one years old.

The *French* army acts now wholly on the defenſive, ſtrongly fortified in their trenches; and the young *French* king ſends overtures for a treaty of peace by the duke of *Mantua*; which, becauſe it

is

is a matter of ſtate, that concerns us here at home, I ſhall ſpeak no farther of.

I ſhall add but one prediction more, and that in myſtical terms, which ſhall be included in a verſe out of *Virgil*,

Alter erit jam Tethys, et altera quæ vebat Argo
Delectos Heroas.

Upon the 25th day of this month, the fulfilling of this prediction will be manifeſt to every body.

This is the fartheſt I have proceeded in my calculations for the preſent year. I do not pretend, that theſe are all the great events, which will happen in this period, but that thoſe I have ſet down will infallibly come to paſs. It will perhaps ſtill be objected, why I have not ſpoke more particularly of affairs at home, or of the ſucceſs of our armies abroad, which I might, and could very largely have done; but thoſe in power have wiſely diſcouraged men from meddling in publick concerns, and I was reſolved by no means to give the leaſt offence. This I will venture to ſay, that it will be a glo-

rious

rious campaign for the *allies*, wherein the *Engliſh* forces, both by ſea and land, will have their full ſhare of honour: that her majeſty queen *ANNE* will continue in health and proſperity: and that no ill accident will arrive to any in the chief miniſtry.

As to the particular events I have mentioned, the readers may judge by the fulfilling of them, whether I am on the level with common aſtrologers; who, with an old paultry cant, and a few pothooks for planets, to amuſe the vulgar, have, in my opinion, too long been ſuffered to abuſe the world: but an honeſt phyſician ought not to be deſpiſed, becauſe there are ſuch things as mountebanks. I hope I have ſome ſhare of reputation, which I would not willingly forfeit for a frolick or humour: and I believe no gentleman, who reads this paper, will look upon it to be of the ſame caſt or mould with the common ſcribbles that are every day hawked about. My fortune hath placed me above the little regard of writing for a few pence, which I neither value or want: therefore let not wiſe men too haſtily condemn

condemn this eſſay, intended for a good deſign, to cultivate and improve an ancient art, long in diſgrace by having fallen into mean unſkilful hands. A little time will determine whether I have deceived others or myſelf: and I think it is no very unreaſonable requeſt, that men would pleaſe to ſuſpend their judgments till then. I was once of the opinion with thoſe, who deſpiſe all predictions from the ſtars, till in the year 1686, a man of quality ſhewed me, written in his *album* †, that the moſt learned aſtronomer, captain *Halley*, aſſured him, he would never believe any thing of the ſtars influence, if there were not a great revolution in *England* in the year 1688. Since that time I began to have other thoughts, and after eighteen years diligent ſtudy and application, I think I have no reaſon to repent of my pains. I ſhall detain the reader no longer, than to let him know, that the account I deſign to give of next years events, ſhall take in the principal affairs that hap-

† *Album*, is the name of a paper book, in which it was uſual for a man's friends to write down a ſentence with their names, to keep them in his remembrance, it is ſtill common in ſome of the foreign univerſities.

pen

pen in *Europe*; and if I be denied the liberty of offering it to my own country, I ſhall appeal to the learned world, by publiſhing it in *Latin*, and giving order to have it printed in *Holland*.

THE

THE ACCOMPLISHMENT

Of the Firſt of

Mr. *Bickerſtaff*'s Predictions;

BEING AN

ACCOUNT

Of the Death of

Mr. *Partridge*, the ALMANACK-MAKER,
Upon the 29th Inſtant.

In a Letter to a Perſon of Honour.

Written in the Year 1708.

MY LORD,

IN obedience to your lordſhip's commands, as well as to ſatisfy my own curioſity, I have for ſome days paſt enquired conſtantly after *Partridge* the almanack-maker, of whom it was foretold in Mr. *Bickerſtaff*'s predictions, publiſhed about a month ago, that he ſhould die the 29th inſtant about eleven at night of a raging fever. I had ſome ſort of knowledge of him, when I was employed in the revenue, becauſe he uſed every year to preſent me with his almanack, as he

did

did other gentlemen, upon the ſcore of ſome little gratuity we gave him. I ſaw him accidentally once or twice about ten days before he died, and obſerved he began very much to droop and languiſh, though I hear, his friends did not ſeem to apprehend him in any danger. About two or three days ago he grew ill, was confined firſt to his chamber, and in a few hours after to his bed, where † Dr. *Caſe* and Mrs. *Kirleus* were ſent for to viſit, and to preſcribe to him. Upon this intelligence I ſent thrice every day one ſervant or other to enquire after his health; and yeſterday, about four in the afternoon, word was brought me, that he was paſt hopes: upon which I prevailed with myſelf to go and ſee him, partly out of commiſeration, and I confeſs, partly out of curioſity. He knew me very well, ſeemed ſurprized at my condeſcenſion, and made me compliments upon it, as well as he could in the condition he was. The people about him ſaid, he had been for ſome time delirious; but when I ſaw

† Two famous quacks at that time.

him, he had his underſtanding as well as ever I knew, and ſpoke ſtrong and hearty, without any ſeeming uneaſineſs or conſtraint. After I had told him how ſorry I was to ſee him in thoſe melancholy circumſtances, and ſaid ſome other civilities, ſuitable to the occaſion, I deſired him to tell me freely and ingenuouſly, whether the predictions Mr. *Bickerſtaff* had publiſhed relating to his death, had not too much affected and worked on his imagination. He confeſſed, he had often had it in his head, but never with much apprehenſion, till about a fortnight before; ſince which time it had the perpetual poſſeſſion of his mind and thoughts, and he did verily believe was the true natural cauſe of his preſent diſtemper: for, ſaid he, I am thoroughly perſuaded, and I think I have very good reaſons, that Mr. *Bickerſtaff* ſpoke altogether by gueſs, and knew no more what will happen this year, than I did myſelf. I told him his diſcourſe ſurprized me; and I would be glad, he were in a ſtate of health to be able to tell me, what reaſon he had to be convinced

of

of Mr. *Bickerſtaff*'s ignorance. He replied, I am a poor ignorant fellow, bred to a mean trade, yet I have ſenſe enough to know, that all pretences of foretelling by aſtrology are deceits, for this manifeſt reaſon, becauſe the wiſe and the learned, who can only judge whether there be any truth in this ſcience, do all unanimouſly agree to laugh at and deſpiſe it; and none but the poor ignorant vulgar give it any credit, and that only upon the word of ſuch ſilly wretches as I and my fellows, who can hardly write or read. I then aſked him, why he had not calculated his own nativity, to ſee whether it agreed with *Bickerſtaff*'s prediction? at which he ſhook his head, and ſaid, oh! ſir, this is no time for jeſting, but for repenting thoſe fooleries, as I do now from the very bottom of my heart. By what I can gather from you, ſaid I, the obſervations and predictions you printed with your almanacks, were mere impoſitions on the people. He replied, if it were otherwiſe, I ſhould have the leſs to anſwer for. We have a common form for all thoſe things; as to foretelling the weather, we never meddle

with that, but leave it to the printer, who takes it out of any old almanack, as he thinks fit; the reſt was my own invention to make my almanack ſell, having a wife to maintain, and no other way to get my bread; for mending old ſhoes is a poor livelihood; and (added he, ſighing) I wiſh I may not have done more miſchief by my phyſick than my aſtrology; though I had ſome good receipts from my grandmother, and my own compoſitions were ſuch, as I thought could at leaſt do no hurt.

I had ſome other diſcourſe with him, which now I cannot call to mind; and I fear I have already tired your lordſhip. I ſhall only add one circumſtance, that on his death-bed he declared himſelf a nonconformiſt, and had a fanatick preacher to be his ſpiritual guide. After half an hour's converſation I took my leave, being almoſt ſtifled by the cloſeneſs of the room. I imagined he could not hold out long, and therefore withdrew to a little coffee-houſe hard by, leaving a ſervant at the houſe with orders to come immediately, and tell me, as near as he could, the minute

nute, when *Partridge* ſhould expire, which was not above two hours after; when, looking upon my watch, I found it to be above five minutes after ſeven; by which it is clear that Mr. *Bickerſtaff* was miſtaken almoſt four hours in his calculation. In the other circumſtances he was exact enough. But whether he hath not been the cauſe of this poor man's death, as well as the predictor, may be very reaſonably diſputed. However, it muſt be confeſſed, the matter is odd enough, whether we ſhould endeavour to account for it by chance, or the effect of imagination: for my own part, though I believe no man hath leſs faith in theſe matters, yet I ſhall wait with ſome impatience, and not without ſome expectation, the fulfilling of Mr. *Bickerſtaff*'s ſecond prediction, that the cardinal *de Noailles* is to die upon the fourth of *April*, and if that ſhould be verified as exactly as this of poor *Partridge*, I muſt own I ſhould be wholly ſurprized, and at a loſs, and ſhould infallibly expect the accompliſhment of all the reſt.

This piece being on the same subject, and very rare, *we have thought fit to add it, though* not written by the same hand.

N. B. In the *Dublin* edition it is said to be written by the late *N. Rowe*, Esq; which is a mistake: for the reverend Dr. *Yalden*, preacher of *Bridewell*, Mr. *Partridge*'s near neighbour, drew it up for him.

'Squire *BICKERSTAFF* Detected;

OR, THE

Astrological IMPOSTOR Convicted:

BY

JOHN PARTRIDGE,

Student in Physick and Astrology.

IT is hard, my dear countrymen of these united nations, it is very hard, that a *Briton* born, a protestant astrologer, a man of revolution principles, an assertor of the liberty and property of the people, should cry out in vain for justice against a *Frenchman*, a papist, and an illiterate pretender to science, that would blast my reputation, most inhumanly bury me alive, and defraud my native country of those

thoſe ſervices, which in my double capacity, I daily offer the publick.

What great provocations I have received, let the impartial reader judge, and how unwillingly, even in my own defence, I now enter the liſts againſt falſehood, ignorance and envy: but I am exaſperated, at length, to drag out this *Cacus* † from the den of obſcurity where he lurks, detect him by the light of thoſe ſtars he has ſo impudently traduced, and ſhew there is not a monſter in the ſkies ſo pernicious and malevolent to mankind, as an ignorant pretender to phyſick and aſtrology. I ſhall not directly fall on the many groſs errors, nor expoſe the notorious abſurdities of this proſtituted libeller, till I have let the learned world fairly into the controverſy depending, and then leave the unprejudiced to judge of the merits and juſtice of my cauſe.

It was towards the concluſion of the year 1707, when an impudent pamphlet crept into the world, intituled, *predictions*, etc. *by* Iſaac Bickerſtaff, *Eſq*;—A-

† A thief ſeized in a cavern by *Hercules*.

mongſt the many arrogant aſſertions laid down by that lying ſpirit of divination, he was pleaſed to pitch on the cardinal *de Noailles* and myſelf, among many other eminent and illuſtrious perſons, that were to die within the compaſs of the enſuing year; and peremptorily fixes the month, day, and hour of our deaths; this, I think, is ſporting with great men, and publick ſpirits, to the ſcandal of religion, and reproach of power; and if ſovereign princes and aſtrologers muſt make diverſion for the vulgar — why then farewel, ſay I, to all governments, eccleſiaſtical and civil. But, I thank my better ſtars, I am alive to confront this falſe and audacious predictor, and to make him rue the hour he ever affronted a man of ſcience and reſentment. The cardinal may take what meaſures he pleaſes with him; as his excellency is a foreigner, and a papiſt, he has no reaſon to rely on me for his juſtification; I ſhall only aſſure the world he is alive —— but as he was bred to letters, and is maſter of a pen, let him uſe it in his own defence. In the mean time I ſhall preſent the publick with a faithful narrative

narrative of the ungenerous treatment and hard uſage I have received from the virulent papers and malicious practices of this pretended aſtrologer.

A true and impartial account of the proceedings of Iſaac Bickerſtaff, Eſq; againſt me.

The 28th of *March*, *anno Dom.* 1708, being the night this ſham-prophet had ſo impudently fixed for my laſt, which made little impreſſion on myſelf; but I cannot anſwer for my whole family; for my wife, with a concern more than uſual, prevailed on me to take ſomewhat to ſweat for a cold; and, between the hours of eight and nine, to go to bed: the maid, as ſhe was warming my bed, with a curioſity natural to young wenches, runs to the window, and aſks of one paſſing the ſtreet, who the bell tolled for? Dr. *Partridge*, ſays he, the famous almanack-maker, who died ſuddenly this evening: the poor girl provoked told him, he lyed like a raſcal; the other very ſedately replied, the ſexton had ſo informed him, and

and if falſe, he was to blame for impoſing upon a ſtranger. She aſked a ſecond, and a third, as they paſſed, and every one was in the ſame tone. Now, I do not ſay theſe are accomplices to a certain aſtrological 'ſquire, and that one *Bickerſtaff* might be ſauntering thereabouts; becauſe I will aſſert nothing here, but what I dare atteſt, for plain matter of fact. My wife at this fell into a violent diſorder; and I muſt own I was a little diſcompoſed at the oddneſs of the accident. In the mean time one knocks at my door; *Betty* runs down, and opening, finds a ſober grave perſon, who modeſtly enquires, if this was Dr. *Partridge*'s? ſhe taking him for ſome cautious city-patient, that came at that time for privacy, ſhews him into the dining-room. As ſoon as I could compoſe myſelf, I went to him, and was ſurprized to find my gentleman mounted on a table with a two-foot rule in his hand, meaſuring my walls, and taking the dimenſions of the room. Pray, Sir, ſays I, not to interrupt you, have you any buſineſs with me? only, Sir, replies he, order the girl to bring me a better

light, for this is but a very dim one. Sir, ſays I, my name is *Partridge*: oh! the doctor's brother, belike, cries he; the ſtair-caſe, I believe, and theſe two apartments hung in cloſe mourning, will be ſufficient, and only a ſtrip of bays round the other rooms. The doctor muſt needs die rich, he had great dealings in his way for many years; if he had no family-coat, you had as good uſe the eſcutcheons of the company, they are as ſhowiſh, and will look as magnificent, as if he was deſcended from the blood-royal. With that I aſſumed a greater air of authority, and demanded who employed him, or how he came there? Why, I was ſent, ſir, by the company of undertakers, ſays he, and they were employed by the honeſt gentleman, who is executor to the good doctor departed; and our raſcally porter, I believe, is fallen faſt aſleep with the black cloth and ſconces, or he had been here, and we might have been tacking up by this time. Sir, ſays I, pray be adviſed by a friend, and make the beſt of your ſpeed out of my doors, for I hear my wife's voice, (which by the by, is pretty diſtinguiſhable)

guiſhable) and in that corner of the room ſtands a good cudgel, which ſomebody has felt before now; if that light in her hands, and ſhe know the buſineſs you come about, without conſulting the ſtars, I can aſſure you it will be employed very much to the detriment of your perſon. Sir, cries he, bowing with great civility, I perceive extreme grief for the loſs of the doctor diſorders you a little at preſent, but early in the morning I will wait on you with all neceſſary materials, Now I mention no Mr. *Bickerſtaff*; nor do I ſay, that a certain ſtar-gazing 'ſquire has been playing my executor before his time; but I leave the world to judge, and he that puts things and things fairly together, will not be much wide of the mark.

Well, once more I got my doors cloſed, and prepared for bed, in hopes of a little repoſe after ſo many ruffling adventures; juſt as I was putting out my light in order to it, another bounces as hard as he can knock; I opened the window, and aſk who is there, and what he wants? I am *Ned* the *ſexton*, replies he, and come to know whether the doctor left any orders

for

for a funeral ſermon, and where he is to be laid, and whether his grave is to be plain or bricked? Why, ſirrah, ſays I, you know me well enough; you know I am not dead, and how dare you affront me after this manner? Alack-a-day, ſir, replies the fellow, why it is in print, and the whole town knows you are dead; why, there is Mr. *White* the joiner is but fitting ſcrews to your coffin, he will be here with it in an inſtant: he was afraid you would have wanted it before this time. Sirrah, ſirrah, ſays I, you ſhall know to-morrow to your coſt, that I am alive, and alive like to be. Why, it is ſtrange, ſir, ſays he, you ſhould make ſuch a ſecret of your death to us that are your neighbours; it looks as if you had a deſign to defraud the church of its dues; and let me tell you, for one that has lived ſo long by the heavens, that is unhandſomely done. Hiſt, hiſt, ſays another rogue that ſtood by him; away, doctor, into your flannel gear as faſt as you can, for here is a whole pack of diſmals coming to you with their black equipage, and how indecent will it look for you to ſtand

frightening folks at your window, when you ſhould have been in your coffin this three hours? in ſhort, what with undertakers, imbalmers, joiners, ſextons, and your damned elegy-hawkers upon a late practitioner in phyſick and aſtrology, I got not one wink of ſleep that night, nor ſcarce a moment's reſt ever ſince. Now I doubt not, but this villainous 'ſquire has the impudence to aſſert, that theſe are entirely ſtrangers to him; he, good man, knows nothing of the matter, and honeſt *Iſaac Bickerſtaff*, I warrant you, is more a man of honour, than to be an accomplice with a pack of raſcals, that walk the ſtreets on nights, and diſturb good people in their beds; but he is out, if he thinks the whole world is blind; for there is one *John Partridge* can ſmell a knave as far as *Grubſtreet*,—although he lies in the moſt exalted garret, and writes himſelf 'ſquire:—but I will keep my temper, and proceed in the narration.

I could not ſtir out of doors for the ſpace of three months after this, but preſently one comes up to me in the ſtreet; Mr. *Partridge*, that coffin you was laſt buried in, I have

have not been yet paid for: doctor, cries another dog, how do you think people can live by making of graves for nothing? next time you die, you may even toll out the bell yourſelf for *Ned*. A third rogue tips me by the elbow, and wonders, how I have the conſcience to ſneak abroad without paying my funeral expences. Lord, ſays one, I durſt have ſwore that was honeſt Dr. *Partridge*, my old friend; but poor man, he is gone. I beg your pardon, ſays another, you look ſo like my old acquaintance, that I uſed to conſult on ſome private occaſions; but, alack, he is gone the way of all fleſh — Look, look, look, cries a third, after a competent ſpace of ſtaring at me, would not one think our neighbour the almanack-maker was crept out of his grave to take the other peep at the ſtars in this world, and ſhew how much he is improved in fortune-telling by having taken a journey to the other?

Nay, the very reader of our pariſh, a good ſober, diſcreet perſon, has ſent two or three times for me to come and be buried decently, or ſend him ſufficient rea-

ſons

ſons to the contrary, or, if I have been interred in any other pariſh, to produce my certificate, as the act * requires. My poor wife is almoſt run diſtracted with being called widow *Partridge*, when ſhe knows it is falſe; and once a term ſhe is cited into the court to take out letters of adminiſtration. But the greateſt grievance is, a paultry quack, that takes up my calling juſt under my noſe, and in his printed directions with *N. B.* † ſays, he lives in the houſe of the late ingenious Mr. *John Partridge*, an eminent practitioner in leather, phyſick, and aſtrology.

But to ſhew how far the wicked ſpirit of envy, malice and reſentment can hurry ſome men, my nameleſs old perſecutor had provided me a monument at the ſtone-cutter's, and would have erected it in the pariſh-church; and this piece of notorious and expenſive villainy had actually ſucceeded, if I had not uſed my utmoſt intereſt with the veſtry, where it

* The ſtatute of 30 *Car.* II. for burying in woolen requires, that oath ſhall be made of the compliance with this act, and a certificate thereof lodged with the miniſter of the pariſh within eight days after interment.

Was

was carried at laſt but by two voices, that I am alive. That ſtratagem failing, out comes a long ſable elegy, bedecked with hour-glaſſes, mattocks, ſculls, ſpades, and ſkeletons, with an epitaph as confidently written to abuſe me, and my profeſſion, as if I had been under ground theſe twenty years.

And, after ſuch barbarous treatment as this, can the world blame me, when I aſk, what is become of the freedom of an *Engliſhman?* and where is the liberty and property, that my *old glorious friend* came over to aſſert? we have drove popery out of the nation, and ſent ſlavery to foreign climes. The arts only remain in bondage, when a man of ſcience and character ſhall be openly inſulted in the midſt of the many uſeful ſervices he is daily paying the publick. Was it ever heard, even in *Turkey* or *Algiers*, that a ſtate-aſtrologer was bantered out of his life by an ignorant impoſtor, or bawled out of the world by a pack of villanous, deep-mouthed hawkers? though I print almanacks, and publiſh advertiſements; though I produce certificates under the

miniſters and church-wardens hands I am alive, and atteſt the ſame on oath at quarter-ſeſſions, out comes a full and true relation of the death and interment of *John Partridge*; truth is bore down, atteſtations neglected, the teſtimony of ſober perſons deſpiſed, and a man is looked upon by his neighbours as if he had been ſeven years dead, and is buried alive in the midſt of his friends and acquaintance.

Now can any man of common ſenſe think it conſiſtent with the honour of my profeſſion, and not much beneath the dignity of a philoſopher, to ſtand bawling before his own door?—alive! alive! ho! the famous Dr. *Partridge!* no counterfeit, but all alive!——as if I had the twelve celeſtial monſters of the *zodiack* to ſhew within, or was forced for a livelihood to turn retailer to *May* and *Bartholomew* fairs. Therefore, if her majeſty would but graciouſly be pleaſed to think a hardſhip of this nature worthy her royal conſideration, and the next parliament, in their great wiſdom, caſt but an eye towards the deplorable caſe of their old

philo-

Philomath, that annually beſtows his poetical good wiſhes on them, I am ſure there is one *Iſaac Bickerſtaff*, Eſq; would ſoon be truſſed up for his bloody predictions, and putting good ſubjects in terror of their lives: and that henceforward to murder a man by way of prophecy, and bury him in a printed letter, either to a lord or commoner, ſhall as legally entitle him to the preſent poſſeſſion of *Tyburn*, as if he robbed on the highway, or cut your throat in bed.

I ſhall demonſtrate to the judicious, that *France* and *Rome* are at the bottom of this horrid conſpiracy againſt me; and that *Gulprit* aforeſaid is a popiſh emiſſary, has paid his viſits to St. *Germains*, and is now in the meaſures of *Lewis* XIV. That in attempting my reputation, there is a general maſſacre of learning deſigned in theſe realms; and through my ſides there is a wound given to all the proteſtant almanack-makers in the univerſe.

Vivat Regina.

A VINDICATION OF *Iſaac Bickerſtaff*, Eſq; AGAINST

What is objected to him by Mr. *Partridge* in his almanack for the preſent year 1709.

By the ſaid ISAAC BICKERSTAFF, Eſq;

Written in the Year 1709.

MR. *Partridge* hath been lately pleaſed to treat me after a very rough manner, *in that which is called*, his almanack for the preſent year: ſuch uſage is very undecent from *one gentleman to another*, and doth not at all contribute to the diſcovery of truth, which ought to be the great end in all diſputes of the *learned*. To call a man *fool* and *villain*, and *impudent fellow*, only for differing from him in a point meerly ſpeculative, is, in my humble opinion, a very improper ſtyle for a perſon of *his education*. I appeal to the *learned world*, whether in my laſt year's predictions I gave him the leaſt provo-

provocation for ſuch unworthy treatment. Philoſophers have differed in all ages; but the diſcreeteſt among them have always differed as became philoſophers. Scurrility and paſſion, in a controverſy among *ſcholars*, is juſt ſo much of nothing to the purpoſe, and at beſt, a tacit confeſſion of a weak cauſe: my concern is not ſo much for my own reputation, as that of the *republick of letters*, which Mr. *Partridge* hath endeavoured to wound through my ſides. If men of publick ſpirit muſt be ſuperciliouſly treated for their ingenious attempts, how will true uſeful knowledge be ever advanced? I wiſh Mr. *Partridge* knew the thoughts, which *foreign univerſities* have conceived of his ungenerous proceedings with me; but I am too tender of his reputation to publiſh them to the world. That ſpirit of envy and pride, which blaſts ſo many riſing genius's in our nation, is yet unknown among *profeſſors* abroad: the neceſſity of juſtifying myſelf will excuſe my vanity, when I tell the reader, that I have near a hundred *honorary* letters from ſeveral parts of *Europe* (ſome as far as *Muſcovy*)

in praiſe of my performance. Beſides ſeveral others, which, as I have been credibly informed, were opened in the poſt-office, and never ſent me. It is true the *inquiſition* in *Portugal* was † pleaſed to burn my predictions, and condemn the author and readers of them; but I hope at the ſame time, it will be conſidered, in how deplorable a ſtate *learning* lies at preſent in that kingdom: and with the profoundeſt veneration for *crowned heads*, I will preſume to add, that it a little concerned *his majeſty of Portugal* to interpoſe his authority in behalf of a *ſcholar* and a *gentleman*, the ſubject of a nation, with which he is now in ſo ſtrict an alliance. But the other kingdoms and ſtates of *Europe* have treated me with more candor and generoſity. If I had leave to print the *Latin* letters tranſmitted to me from foreign parts, they would fill a volume, and be a full defence againſt all that Mr. *Partridge* or his accomplices of the *Portugal inquiſition*, will be ever able to object; who, by the way, are the only ene-

† This is fact, as the author was aſſured by Sir *Paul Methuen*, then ambaſſador to that crown.

mies

mies my predictions have ever met with at home or abroad. But I hope, I know better what is due to the honour of a *learned correſpondence* in ſo tender a point. Yet ſome of thoſe illuſtrious perſons will perhaps excuſe me for tranſcribing a paſſage or two in my vindication*. The moſt learned monſieur *Leibnits* thus addreſſes to me his third letter: *illuſtriſſimo Bickerſtaffio aſtrologiæ inſtauratori*, &c. Monſieur *le Clerc*, quoting my predictions in a treatiſe he publiſhed laſt year, is pleaſed to ſay, *ita nuperrimè Bickerſtaffius magnum illud Angliæ ſidus.* Another great profeſſor writing of me, has theſe words: *Bickerſtaffius, nobilis Anglus, aſtrologorum hujuſce ſæculi facile princeps.* Signior *Magliabecchi*, the *great duke*'s famous library-keeper, ſpends almoſt his whole letter in compliments and praiſes. It is true, the renowned *profeſſor* of aſtronomy at *Utrecht* ſeems to differ from me in one article; but it is after the modeſt manner, that becomes a philoſopher; as, *pace tanti vi-*

* The quotations here inſerted are in imitation of Dr. *Bentley*, in ſome part of the famous controverſy between him and Mr. *Boyle*.

ri dixerim: and *page* 55, he ſeems to lay the error upon the printer (as indeed it ought) and ſays, *vel forſan error typographi, cum alioquin Bickerſtaffius vir doctiſſimus*, &c.

If Mr. *Partridge* had followed theſe examples in the controverſy between us, he might have ſpared me the trouble of juſtifying myſelf in ſo publick a manner. I believe no man is readier to own his errors than I, or more thankful to thoſe, who will pleaſe to inform him of them. But it ſeems this gentleman, inſtead of encouraging the progreſs of his own art, is pleaſed to look upon all attempts of that kind as an invaſion of his province. He hath been indeed ſo wiſe to make no objection againſt the truth of my predictions, except in one ſingle point relating to himſelf: and to demonſtrate how much men are blinded by their own partiality, I do ſolemnly aſſure the reader, that he is the only perſon, from whom I ever heard that objection offered; which conſideration alone, I think, will take off all its weight.

With my utmoſt endeavours I have not

not been able to trace above two objections ever made againſt the truth of my laſt year's prophecies: the firſt was of a *French* man, who was pleaſed to publiſh to the world, that *the cardinal* de Noailles *was ſtill alive; notwithſtanding the pretended prophecy of monſieur* Biquerſtaffe: but how far a *Frenchman*, a *papiſt*, and an *enemy* is to be believed in his own cauſe againſt an *Engliſh proteſtant*, who is *true to the government*, I ſhall leave to the candid and impartial reader.

The other objection is the unhappy occaſion of this diſcourſe, and relates to an article in my predictions, which foretold the death of Mr. *Partridge* to happen on *March* 29, 1708. This he is pleaſed to contradict abſolutely in the almanack he hath publiſhed for the preſent year, and in that ungentlemanly manner (pardon the expreſſion) as I have above related. In that work he very roundly aſſerts, that he *is not only now alive, but was likewiſe alive upon that very* 29th *of* March, *when I had foretold he ſhould die.* This is the ſubject of the preſent controverſy between us; which I deſign to handle with all

all brevity, perſpicuity, and calmneſs: in this diſpute, I am ſenſible the eyes not only of *England*, but of all *Europe*, will be upon us; and the *learned* in every country will, I doubt not, take part on that ſide, where they find moſt appearance of reaſon and truth.

Without entering into criticiſms of *chronology* about the hour of his death, I ſhall only prove that Mr. *Partridge* is not alive. And my firſt argument is thus: above a thouſand gentlemen having bought his almanacks for this year, merely to find what he ſaid againſt me; at every line they read, they would lift up their eyes, and cry out, betwixt rage and laughter, *they were ſure no man alive ever writ ſuch damned ſtuff as this.* Neither did I ever hear that opinion diſputed: ſo that Mr. *Partridge* lies under a *dilemma*, either of diſowning his almanack, or allowing himſelf to be *no man alive.* But now if an *uninformed* carcaſe walks ſtill about, and is pleaſed to call itſelf *Partridge*, Mr. *Bickerſtaff* does not think himſelf any way anſwerable for that. Neither had the ſaid carcaſe any right to beat the poor boy, who

who happened to paſs by it in the ſtreet, crying, *a full and true account of Dr.* Partridge's *death*, &c.

Secondly, Mr. *Partridge* pretends to tell fortunes, and recover ſtolen goods; which all the pariſh ſays, he muſt do by converſing with the devil and other evil ſpirits: and no wiſe man will ever allow, he could converſe perſonally with either, till after he was dead.

Thirdly, I will plainly prove him to be dead out of his own almanack for this year, and from the very paſſage, which he produceth to make us think him alive. He there ſays, *he is not only now alive, but was alſo alive upon that very 29th of* March, *which I foretold he ſhould die on:* by this, he declares his opinion, that a man may be alive now, who was not alive a twelvemonth ago. And indeed, there lies the ſophiſtry of his argument. He dares not aſſert, he was alive ever ſince that 29th of *March*, but that he *is now alive, and was ſo on that day:* I grant the letter; for he did not die till night, as appears by the printed account of his death, in a *letter to a lord*; and whether he

he be ſince revived, I leave the world to judge. This indeed is perfect cavilling, and I am aſhamed to dwell any longer upon it.

Fourthly, I will appeal to Mr. *Partridge* himſelf, whether it be probable I could have been ſo indiſcreet, to begin my predictions with the *only* falſhood, that ever was pretended to be in them; and this in an affair at home, where I had ſo many opportunities to be exact; and muſt have given ſuch advantages againſt me to a perſon of Mr. *Partridge*'s wit and learning, who, if he could poſſibly have raiſed one ſingle objection more againſt the truth of my prophecies, would hardly have ſpared me.

And here I muſt take occaſion to reprove the above-mentioned writer of the relation of Mr. *Partridge*'s death, in a *letter to a lord*; who was pleaſed to tax me with a miſtake of *four whole hours* in my calculation of that event. I muſt confeſs, this cenſure pronounced with an air of certainty, in a matter that ſo nearly concerned me, and by a *grave judicious author*, moved me not a little. But though I was

I was at that time out of town, yet ſeveral of my friends, whoſe curioſity had led them to be exactly informed (for as to my own part, having no doubt at all in the matter, I never once thought of it) aſſured me, I computed to ſomething under half an hour; which (I ſpeak my private opinion) is an error of no very great magnitude, that men ſhould raiſe a clamour about it. I ſhall only ſay, it would not be amiſs, if that author would henceforth be more tender of other mens reputation as well as his own. It is well there were no more miſtakes of that kind; if there had, I preſume he would have told me of them with as little ceremony.

There is one objection againſt Mr. *Partridge*'s death, which I have ſometimes met with, though indeed very ſlightly offered, that he ſtill continues to write almanacks. But this is no more than what is common to all of that profeſſion; *Gadbury*, *poor Robin*, *Dove*, *Wing*, and ſeveral others, do yearly publiſh their almanacks, though ſeveral of them have been dead ſince before the *revolution*. Now the natural reaſon of this I take to be,

be, that whereas it is the privilege of other authors *to live after their deaths*; almanack-makers are alone excluded, because their diſſertations treating only upon the minutes as they paſs, become uſeleſs as thoſe go off. In conſideration of which, *time* whoſe *regiſters* they are, gives them a leaſe in reverſion, to continue their works after their death.

I ſhould not have given the publick or myſelf the trouble of this vindication, if my name had not been made uſe of by ſeveral perſons, to whom I never ſent it; one of which, a few days ago, was pleaſed to father on me a new ſett of predictions. But I think theſe are things too ſerious to be trifled with. It grieved me to the heart, when I ſaw my labours, which had coſt me ſo much thought and watching, bawled about by common hawkers, which I only intended for the weighty conſideration of the graveſt perſons. This prejudiced the world ſo much at firſt, that ſeveral of my friends had the aſſurance to aſk me, whether I were in jeſt? to which I only anſwered coldly, *that the event would ſhew.* But it is the talent of our

age

age and nation, to turn things of the greateſt importance into ridicule. When the end of the year had *verified all my predictions*, out comes Mr. *Partridge*'s almanack, diſputing the point of his death; ſo that I am employed, like the general who was forced to kill his enemies twice over, whom a *necromancer* had raiſed to life. If Mr. *Partridge* hath practiſed the ſame experiment upon himſelf, and be again alive, long may he continue ſo; that doth not in the leaſt contradict my veracity: but I think I have clearly proved, by *invincible demonſtration*, that he died at fartheſt within half an hour of the time I foretold, and not four hours ſooner, as the abovementioned author, in his letter to a lord, hath maliciouſly ſuggeſted, with deſign to blaſt my credit by charging me with ſo groſs a miſtake.

A FA-

A

FAMOUS PREDICTION

OF

MERLIN,

The *Britiſh* Wizard.

Written above a Thouſand Years ago, and relating to the Year 1709.

With Explanatory Notes, by T. N. Philomath.

LAST year was publiſhed a paper of predictions, pretended to be written by one *Iſaac Bickerſtaff*, Eſq; but the true deſign of it was to ridicule the art of aſtrology, and expoſe its profeſſors as ignorant or impoſtors. Againſt this imputation, Dr. *Partridge* hath learnedly vindicated himſelf in his almanack for that year.

For a farther vindication of this famous art, I have thought fit to preſent the world with the following prophecy. The original is ſaid to be of the famous *Merlin*, who lived about a thouſand years ago; and the following tranſlation is two hundred years old, for it ſeems to be written

written near the end of *Henry* the ſeventh's reign. I found it in an old edition of *Merlin*'s prophecies, imprinted at *London* by *John Hawkins* in the year 1530, *page* 39. I ſet it down word for word in the old orthography, and ſhall take leave to ſubjoin a few explanatory notes.

Seven and Ten addyd to Nine,
Of Fraunce her Woe this is the Sygne,
Tamys Rivere twys y-frozen,
Walke ſans wetyng Shoes ne Hozen.
Then comyth foorthe, Ich underſtonde,
From Towne of Stoffe to fattyn Londe,
An herdie Chyftan, woe the Morne
To Fraunce, that ever he was vorn.
Then ſhall the Fyſhe beweyle his Boſſe;
Nor ſhall grin Berrys make up the Loſſe.

Donge Symnele ſhall again miſ-
carrye:
And Norways Pryd again ſhall
marrey.
And from the Tree where Bloſums
feele,
Ripe Fruit ſhall come, and all is
wele,
Reaums ſhall daunce Honde in
Honde,
And it ſhall be merrye in old Jng-
londe,
Then old Jnglonde ſhall be no
more,
And no Man ſhall be ſorie there-
fore.
Geryon ſhall have three Hedes a-
gayne,
Till Hapsburge makyth them but
twayne.

Explanatory Notes.

Seven and Ten, This line deſcribes the year when theſe events ſhall happen. Seven and ten makes ſeventeen, which I explain ſeventeen hundred, and this num-
ber

ber added to nine, makes the year we are now in; for it muſt be underſtood of the natural year, which begins the firſt of *January*.

Tamys Revere twis, &c. The river *Thames* frozen twice in one year, ſo as men to walk on it, is a very ſignal accident, which perhaps hath not fallen out for ſeveral hundred years before, and is the reaſon why ſome aſtrologers have thought that this prophecy could never be fulfilled, becauſe they imagined ſuch a thing would never happen in our climate.

From Town of Stokke, &c. This is a plain deſignation of the duke of *Marlborough*: one kind of ſtuff uſed to fatten land is called *Marle*, and every body knows that *Borough* is a name for a town; and this way of expreſſion is after the uſual dark manner of old aſtrological predictions.

Then ſhall the Fyſhe, &c. By the *fiſh*, is underſtood the *dauphin* of *France*,

as their kings eldeſt ſons are called: it is here ſaid, he ſhall lament the loſs of the duke of *Burgundy*, called the *Boſſe*, which is an old *Engliſh* word for *hump-ſhoulder*, or *crook-back*, as that duke is known to be; and the prophecy ſeems to mean, that he ſhould be overcome or ſlain. By the *green berrys*, in the next line, is meant the young duke of *Berry*, the *dauphin*'s third ſon, who ſhall not have valour or fortune enough to ſupply the loſs of his eldeſt brother.

Donge Symnele, &c. By *Symnele* is meant the pretended prince of *Wales*, who, if he offers to attempt any thing againſt *England*, ſhall miſcarry as he did before. *Lambert Symnele* is the name of a young man, noted in our hiſtories for perſonating the ſon (as I remember) of *Edward* the fourth.

And Norways Pryd, &c. I cannot gueſs * who is meant by *Norway's pride*, perhaps the reader may, as well as the ſenſe of the two following lines.

* Queen *Anne*.

Reaums

Reaums ſhall, &c. *Reaums*, or, as the word is now, *realms*, is the old name for *kingdoms:* and this is a very plain prediction of our happy *union*, with the felicities that ſhall attend it. It is added that *Old England* ſhall be no more, and yet no man ſhall be ſorry for it. And indeed, properly ſpeaking, *England* is now no more, for the whole iſland is one kingdom under the name of *Britain.*

Geryon ſhall, &c. This prediction, though ſomewhat obſcure, is wonderfully adapt. *Geryon* is ſaid to have been a king of *Spain*, whom *Hercules* ſlew. It was a fiction of the poets, that he had three heads, which the author ſays he ſhall have again: that is, *Spain* ſhall have three kings; which is now wonderfully verified; for beſides the king of *Portugal*, which properly is part of *Spain*, there are now two rivals for *Spain*, *Charles* and *Philip:* but *Charles* being deſcended from the count of *Hapſburgh*, founder of the *Auſtrian* family, ſhall ſoon make thoſe heads but two by overturning *Philip*, and driving him out of *Spain.*

Some of theſe predictions are already fulfilled; and it is highly probable the reſt may be in due time; and I think, I have not forced the words by my explication into any other ſenſe, than what they will naturally bear. If this be granted, I am ſure it muſt be alſo allow'd, that the author (whoever he were) was a perſon of extraordinary ſagacity; and that aſtrology brought to ſuch perfection as this is by no means an art to be deſpiſed, whatever Mr. *Bickerſtaff*, or other merry gentlemen are pleaſed to think. As to the tradition of theſe lines having been writ in the original by *Merlin*, I confeſs I lay not much weight upon it: but it is enough to juſtify their authority, that the book from whence I have tranſcrib'd them, was printed 170 years ago, as appears by the title-page. For the ſatisfaction of any gentleman, who may be either doubtful of the truth, or curious to be informed; I ſhall give order to have the very book ſent to the printer of this paper, with directions to let any body ſee it that pleaſes, becauſe I believe it is pretty ſcarce.

A MEDI-

A

MEDITATION

UPON A

BROOM-STICK,

According to the ſtyle and manner of the honourable *Robert Boyle*'s Meditations *.

THIS ſingle ſtick, which you now behold ingloriouſly lying in that neglected corner, I once knew in a flouriſhing ſtate in a foreſt: it was full of ſap, full of leaves, and full of boughs: but now in vain does the buſy art of man pretend to vye with nature, by tying that withered bundle of twigs to its ſapleſs trunk: it is now at beſt but the reverſe of what it was, a tree turned upſide down, the branches on the earth, and the root in the air; it is now handled by every dirty wench, condemned to do her drudgery, and by a capricious kind of fate, deſtined to make other things clean, and be naſty itſelf: at length worn to the ſtumps in

* The ſword of wit like the ſcythe of time cuts down friend and foe, and attacks every object that accidentally lies in its way: but ſharp and *irreſiſtible* as the edge of it may be, Mr. *Boyle* will always remain *invulnerable*. ORRERY.

the ſervice of the maids, it is either thrown out of doors, or condemned to the laſt uſe, of kindling a fire. When I beheld this, I ſighed, and ſaid within myſelf, **Surely mortal Man is a Broom-ſtick!** nature ſent him into the world ſtrong and luſty, in a thriving condition, wearing his own hair on his head, the proper branches of this reaſoning vegetable, until the axe of intemperance has lopped off his green boughs, and left him a withered trunk: he then flies to art, and puts on a *perriwig*, valuing himſelf upon an unnatural bundle of hairs, all covered with powder, that never grew on his head; but now ſhould this our *broom-ſtick* pretend to enter the ſcene, proud of thoſe *birchen* ſpoils it never bore, and all covered with duſt, though the ſweepings of the fineſt lady's chamber, we ſhould be apt to ridicule and deſpiſe its vanity. Partial judges that we are of our own excellencies, and other men's defaults!

But a *broom-ſtick*, perhaps you will ſay, is an emblem of a tree ſtanding on its head; and pray what is man, but a topſy-turvey creature, his animal faculties perpetually

petually mounted on his rational, his head where his heels ſhould be, groveling on the earth! and yet, with all his faults, he ſets up to be an univerſal reformer and corrector of abuſes, a remover of grievances, rakes into every ſlut's corner of nature, bringing hidden corruptions to the light, and raiſes a mighty duſt where there was none before, ſhaking deeply all the while in the very ſame pollutions he pretends to ſweep away: his laſt days are ſpent in ſlavery to women, and generally the leaſt deſerving; till worn to the ſtumps, like his brother *beſom*, he is either kicked out of doors, or made uſe of to kindle flames for others to warm themſelves by.

A PRO-

A

PROPOSAL

For correcting, improving, and aſcertaining the

ENGLISH TONGUE,

In a letter to the moſt honourable *Robert* earl of *Oxford* and *Mortimer*, lord high treaſurer of *Great-Britain*.

To the moſt honourable Robert *earl of* Oxford, *etc.*

My Lord,

WHAT I had the honour of mentioning to your lordſhip ſome time ago in converſation, was not a new thought, juſt then ſtarted by accident or occaſion, but the reſult of long reflection, and I have been confirmed in my ſentiments by the opinion of ſome very judicious perſons, with whom I conſulted. They all agreed, that nothing would be of greater uſe towards the improvement of knowledge and politeneſs, than ſome effectual method for *correcting*, *enlarging*, and *aſcertaining* our language; and they think it a work very poſſible to be compaſſed under the protection of a prince, the countenance and

and encouragement of a miniſtry, and the care of proper perſons choſen for ſuch an undertaking. I was glad to find your lordſhip's anſwer in ſo different a ſtyle, from what hath been commonly made uſe of on the like occaſions for ſome years paſt, *That all ſuch thoughts muſt be deferred to a time of peace*: a topick which ſome have carried ſo far, that they would not have us by any means think of preſerving our civil or religious conſtitution, becauſe we are engaged in a war abroad. It will be among the diſtinguiſhing marks of your miniſtry, my lord, that you have a genius above all ſuch regards, and that no reaſonable propoſal for the honour, the advantage, or the ornament of your country, however foreign to your more immediate office, was ever neglected by you. I confeſs the merit of this candour and condeſcenſion is very much leſſened, becauſe your lordſhip hardly leaves us room to offer our good wiſhes; removing all our difficulties, and ſupplying our wants, faſter than the moſt viſionary projector can adjuſt his ſchemes. And therefore, my lord, the deſign of this paper is not ſo much

much to offer you *ways* and *means*, as to complain of a *grievance*, the redreſſing of which is to be your own work as much as that of paying the *nation's debts*, or opening a trade into the *South-Sea*; and though not of ſuch immediate benefit, as either of theſe, or any other of your glorious actions, yet perhaps in future ages not leſs to your honour.

My lord, I do here in the name of all the learned and polite perſons of the nation complain to your lordſhip as *firſt miniſter*, that our language is extremely imperfect; that its daily improvements are by no means in proportion to its daily corruptions; that the pretenders to poliſh and refine it have chiefly multiplied abuſes and abſurdities; and, that in many inſtances it offends againſt every part of grammar. But leaſt your lordſhip ſhould think my cenſure too ſevere, I ſhall take leave to be more particular.

I believe your lordſhip will agree with me in the reaſon, why our language is leſs refined than thoſe of *Italy*, *Spain*, or *France*. 'Tis plain, that the *Latin* tongue in its purity was never in this iſland, towards

wards the conqueſt, of which few or no attempts were made till the time of *Claudius*; neither was that language ever ſo vulgar in *Britain*, as it is known to have been in *Gaul* and *Spain*. Further, we find that the *Roman* legions here were at length all recalled to help their country againſt the *Goths*, and other barbarous invaders. Mean time the *Britains* left to ſhift for themſelves, and daily harraſſed by cruel inroads from the *Picts*, were forced to call in the *Saxons* for their defence; who conſequently reduced the greateſt part of the iſland to their own power, drove the *Britains* into the moſt remote and mountainous parts, and the reſt of the country in cuſtoms, religion, and language, became wholly *Saxon*. This I take to be the reaſon, why there are more *Latin* words remaining in the *Britiſh* tongue than in the old *Saxon*, which, excepting ſome few variations in the orthography, is the ſame in moſt original words with our preſent *Engliſh*, as well as with the *German* and other *Northern* dialects.

Edward the *Confeſſor*, having lived long in *France* appears to be the firſt who intro-

introduced any mixture of the *French* tongue with the *Saxon*; the court affecting what the prince was fond of, and others taking it up for a faſhion, as it is now with us. *William the Conqueror* proceeded much further; bringing over with him vaſt numbers of that nation, ſcattering them in every monaſtery, giving them great quantities of land, directing all pleadings to be in that language, and endeavouring to make it univerſal in the kingdom. This at leaſt is the opinion generally received: but your lordſhip hath fully convinced me, that the *French* tongue made yet a greater progreſs here under *Harry the Second*, who had large territories on that continent both from his father and his wife, made frequent journeys and expeditions thither, and was always attended with a number of his countrymen, retainers at his court. For ſome centuries after there was a conſtant intercourſe between *France* and *England*, by the dominions we poſſeſſed there, and the conqueſts we made; ſo that our language between two and three hundred years ago ſeems to have had a greater mix-

mixture with *French* than at preſent; many words having been afterwards rejected, and ſome ſince the time of *Spencer*; although we have ſtill retained not a few, which have been long antiquated in *France*. I could produce ſeveral inſtances of both kinds, if it were of any uſe or entertainment.

To examine into the ſeveral circumſtances by which the language of a country may be alter'd, would force me to enter into a wide field. I ſhall only obſerve, that the *Latin*, the *French*, and the *Engliſh*, ſeem to have undergone the ſame fortune. The firſt, from the days of *Romulus* to thoſe of *Julius Cæſar*, ſuffered perpetual changes: and by what we meet in thoſe authors who occaſionally ſpeak on that ſubject, as well as from certain fragments of old laws, it is manifeſt that the *Latin* three hundred years before *Tully* was as unintelligible in his time, as the *Engliſh* and *French* of the ſame period are now; and theſe two have changed as much ſince *William the Conqueror* (which is but little leſs than ſeven hundred years) as the *Latin* appears to have done in the like term.

term. Whether our language or the *French* will decline as faſt as the *Roman* did, is a queſtion, that would perhaps admit more debate than it is worth. There were many reaſons for the corruptions of the laſt: as, the change of their government to a tyranny, which ruined the ſtudy of eloquence, there being no further uſe or encouragement for popular orators: their giving not only the freedom of the city, but capacity for employments, to ſeveral towns in *Gaul*, *Spain*, and *Germany*, and other diſtant parts, as far as *Aſia*; which brought a great number of foreign pretenders into *Rome*: the ſlaviſh diſpoſition of the ſenate and people, by which the wit and eloquence of the age were wholly turned into panegyrick, the moſt barren of all ſubjects: the great corruption of manners, and introduction of foreign luxury, with foreign terms to expreſs it, with ſeveral others, that might be aſſigned; not to mention thoſe invaſions from the *Goths* and *Vandals*, which are too obvious to inſiſt on.

The *Roman* language arrived at great perfection, before it began to decay: and the

the *French* for theſe laſt fifty years hath been poliſhing as much as it will bear, and appears to be declining by the natural inconſtancy of that people, and the affectation of ſome late authors to introduce and multiply cant words, which is the moſt ruinous corruption in any language. *La Bruyere*, a late celebrated writer among them, makes uſe of many new terms, which are not to be found in any of the common dictionaries before his time. But the *Engliſh* tongue is not arrived to ſuch a degree of perfection, as to make us apprehend any thoughts of its decay; and if it were once refined to a certain ſtandard, perhaps there might be ways found out to fix it for ever, or at leaſt till we are invaded and made a conqueſt by ſome other ſtate; and even then our beſt writings might probably be preſerved with care, and grow into eſteem, and the authors have a chance for immortality.

But without ſuch great revolutions as theſe (to which we are, I think leſs ſubject than kingdoms upon the continent) I ſee no abſolute neceſſity why any lan-

guage ſhould be perpetually changing; for we find many examples to the contrary. From *Homer* to *Plutarch* are above a thouſand years; ſo long at leaſt the purity of the *Greek* tongue may be allowed to laſt, and we know not how far before. The *Grecians* ſpread their colonies round all the coaſts of *Aſia Minor*, even to the *Northern* parts lying towards the *Euxine*, in every iſland of the *Ægæan* ſea, and ſeveral others in the *Mediterranean*; where the language was preſerved entire for many ages, after they themſelves became colonies to *Rome*, and till they were over-run by the barbarous nations upon the fall of that Empire. The *Chineſe* have books in their language above two thouſand years old, neither have the frequent conqueſts of the *Tartars* been able to alter it. The *German*, *Spaniſh*, and *Italian*, have admitted few or no changes for ſome ages paſt. The other languages of *Europe* I know nothing of; neither is there any occaſion to conſider them.

Having taken this compaſs, I return to thoſe conſiderations upon our own language,

guage, which I would humbly offer your lordſhip. The period, wherein the *Engliſh* tongue received moſt improvement, I take to commence with the beginning of queen *Elizabeth*'s reign, and to conclude with the great rebellion in forty-two. 'Tis true, there was a very ill taſte both of ſtyle and wit, which prevailed under king *James* the firſt; but that ſeems to have been corrected in the firſt years of his ſucceſſor, who, among many other qualifications of an excellent prince, was a great patron of learning. From the civil war to this preſent time, I am apt to doubt whether the corruptions in our language have not at leaſt equalled the refinements of it; and theſe corruptions very few of the beſt authors in our age have wholly eſcaped. During the uſurpation, ſuch an infuſion of enthuſiaſtic jargon prevailed in every writing, as was not ſhaken off in many years after. To this ſucceeded that licentiouſneſs which entered with the reſtoration, and from infecting our religion and morals fell to corrupt our language; which laſt was not like to be much improved by

thoſe, who at that time made up the court of king *Charles* the ſecond; either ſuch, who had followed him in his baniſhment, or who had been altogether converſant in the dialect of thoſe fanatic times; or young men, who had been educated in the ſame country; ſo that the court, which uſed to be the ſtandard of propriety and correctneſs of ſpeech, was then, and, I think, hath ever ſince continued the worſt ſchool in *England* for that accompliſhment; and ſo will remain, till better care be taken in the education of our young nobility, that they may ſet out into the world with ſome foundation of literature, in order to qualify them for patterns of politeneſs. The conſequence of this defect upon our language may appear from the plays, and other compoſitions written for entertainment within fifty years paſt; filled with a ſucceſſion of affected phraſes, and new conceited words, either borrowed from the current ſtyle of the court, or from thoſe, who under the character of men of wit and pleaſure pretended to give the law. Many of theſe refinements have already been long antiquated,

quated, and are now hardly intelligible; which is no wonder, when they were the product only of ignorance and caprice.

I have never known this great town without one or more *dunces* of figure, who had credit enough to give riſe to ſome new word, and propagate it in moſt converſations, though it had neither humour nor ſignificancy. If it ſtruck the preſent taſte, it was ſoon transferred into the plays and current ſcribbles of the week, and became an addition to our language; while the men of wit and learning, inſtead of early obviating ſuch corruptions, were too often ſeduced to imitate and comply with them.

There is another ſett of men, who have contributed very much to the ſpoiling of the *Engliſh* tongue; I mean the poets from the time of the reſtoration. Theſe gentlemen, although they could not be inſenſible how much our language was already overſtocked with monoſyllables, yet to ſave time and pains introduced that barbarous cuſtom of abbreviating words, to fit them to the meaſure of their verſes; and this they have frequently

done ſo very injudiciouſly, as to form ſuch harſh unharmonious ſounds, that none but a northern ear could endure; they have joined the moſt obdurate conſonants without one intervening vowel, only to ſhorten a ſyllable: and their taſte in time became ſo depraved, that what was at firſt a poetical licenſe not to be juſtified, they made their choice, alledging, that the words pronounced at length ſounded faint and languid. This was a pretence to take up the ſame cuſtom in proſe; ſo that moſt of the books we ſee now-a-days, are full of thoſe manglings and abbreviations. Inſtances of this abuſe are innumerable: what does your lordſhip think of the words, *drudg'd*, *diſturb'd*, *rebuk'd*, *fledg'd*, and a thouſand others every where to be met with in proſe as well as verſe? Where by leaving out a vowel to ſave a ſyllable, we form ſo jarring a ſound, and ſo difficult to utter, that I have often wondered how it could ever obtain.

Another cauſe (and perhaps borrowed from the former) which hath contributed not a little to the maiming of our language,

guage, is a fooliſh opinion, advanced of late years, that we ought to ſpell exactly as we ſpeak; which, beſide the obvious inconvenience of utterly deſtroying our etymology, would be a thing we ſhould never ſee an end of. Not only the ſeveral towns and counties of *England* have a different way of pronouncing, but even here in *London* they clip their words after one manner about the court, another in the city, and a third in the ſuburbs: and in a few years, it is probable, will all differ from themſelves, as fancy or faſhion ſhall direct: all which reduced to writing would entirely confound orthography. Yet many people are ſo fond of this conceit, that it is ſometimes a difficult matter to read modern books and pamphlets; where the words are ſo curtailed, and varied from their original ſpelling, that however hath been uſed to plain *Engliſh*, will hardly know them by ſight.

Several young men at the univerſities, terribly poſſeſſed with the fear of pedantry, run into a worſe extreme, and think all politeneſs to conſiſt in reading the

daily traſh ſent down to them from hence: this they call *knowing the world*, and *reading men and manners*. Thus furniſhed they come up to town, reckon all their errors for accompliſhments, borrow the neweſt ſett of phraſes; and if they take a pen into their hands, all the odd words they have picked up in a coffee houſe, or a gaming ordinary, are produced as flowers of ſtile; and the orthography refined to the utmoſt. To this we owe thoſe monſtrous production, which under the name of *trips*, *ſpies*, *amuſements*, and other conceited appellations, have over-run us for ſome years paſt. To this we owe that ſtrange race of wits, who tell us, they write to the *humour of the age*. And I wiſh I could ſay, theſe quaint fopperies were wholly abſent from graver ſubjects. In ſhort, I would undertake to ſhew your lordſhip ſeveral pieces, where the beauties of this kind are ſo predominant, that with all your ſkill in languages you could never be able to read or underſtand them.

But I am very much miſtaken, if many of theſe falſe refinements among us do not

not ariſe from a principle, which would quite deſtroy their credit, if it were well underſtood and conſidered. For I am afraid, my lord, that with all the real good qualities of our country we are naturally not very polite. This perpetual diſpoſition to ſhorten our words, by retrenching the vowels, is nothing elſe but a tendency to lapſe into the barbarity of thoſe *northern* nations, from whom we are deſcended, and whoſe languages labour all under the ſame defect. For it is worthy our obſervation, that the *Spaniards*, the *French*, and the *Italians*, although derived from the ſame *northern* anceſtors with ourſelves, are with the utmoſt difficulty taught to pronounce our words, which the *Swedes* and *Danes*, as well as the *Germans* and the *Dutch*, attain to with eaſe, becauſe our ſyllables reſemble theirs in the roughneſs and frequency of conſonants. Now, as we ſtruggle with an ill climate to improve the nobler kinds of fruits, are at the expence of walls to receive and reverberate the faint rays of the ſun, and fence againſt the *northern* blaſts, we ſometimes by

by the help of a good ſoil equal the production of warmer countries, who have no need to be at ſo much coſt and care. It is the ſame thing with reſpect to the politer arts among us; and the ſame defect of heat which gives a fierceneſs to our natures, may contribute to that roughneſs of our language, which bears ſome analogy to the harſh fruit of colder countries. For I do not reckon that we want a *genius* more than the reſt of our neighbours: but your lordſhip will be of my opinion, that we ought to ſtruggle with theſe natural diſadvantages as much as we can, and be careful whom we employ, whenever we deſign to correct them, which is a work that has hitherto been aſſumed by the leaſt qualified hands. So that if the choice had been left to me, I would rather have truſted the refinement of our language, as far as it relates to ſound, to the judgment of the women, than of illiterate court-fops, half-witted poets, and univerſity-boys. For it is plain, that women in their manner of corrupting words do naturally diſcard the conſonants, as we do the vowels. What I am going to tell

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your lordſhip appears very trifling: that more than once, where ſome of both ſexes were in company, I have perſuaded two or three of each to take a pen, and write down a number of letters joined together, juſt as it came into their heads; and upon reading this gibberiſh, we have found that which the men had wrote, by the frequent encountring of rough conſonants, to ſound like *High-Dutch*; and the other by the women like *Italian*, abounding in vowels and liquids. Now, though I would by no means give ladies the trouble of adviſing us in the reformation of our language, yet I cannot help thinking, that ſince they have been left out of all meetings, except parties at play, or where worſe deſigns are carried on, our converſation hath very much degenerated.

In order to reform our language, I conceive, my lord, that a free judicious choice ſhould be made of ſuch perſons, as are generally allowed to be beſt qualified for ſuch a work, without any regard to quality, party or profeſſion. Theſe to a certain number at leaſt, ſhould aſſemble at ſome appointed time and place, and fix

fix on rules, by which they deſign to proceed. What methods they will take, is not for me to preſcribe. Your lordſhip, and other perſons in great employment, might pleaſe to be of the number: and I am afraid ſuch a ſociety would want your inſtruction and example as much as your protection; for I have, not without a little envy, obſerved of late the ſtyle of ſome great miniſters very much to exceed that of any other productions.

The perſons who are to undertake this work will have the example of the *French* before them to imitate, where theſe have proceeded right, and to avoid their miſtakes. Beſides the grammar-part, wherein we are allowed to be very defective, they will obſerve many groſs improprieties, which however authoriſed by practice, and grown familiar, ought to be diſcarded. They will find many words that deſerve to be utterly thrown out of our language, many more to be corrected, and perhaps not a few long ſince antiquated, which ought to be reſtored on account of their energy and ſound.

But what I have moſt at heart, is, that

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ſome method ſhould be thought on for *aſcertaining* and *fixing* our language for ever, after ſuch alterations are made in it as ſhall be thought requiſite. For I am of opinion, that it is better a language ſhould not be wholly perfect, than that it ſhould be perpetually changing; and we muſt give over at one time, or at length infallibly change for the worſe, as the *Romans* did, when they began to quit their *ſimplicity* of ſtyle for affected refinements, ſuch as we meet in *Tacitus* and other authors; which ended by degrees in many barbarities, even before the *Goths* had invaded *Italy*.

The fame of our writers is uſually confined to theſe two iſlands, and it is hard it ſhould be limited in *time* as much as *place* by the perpetual variations of our ſpeech. It is your lordſhip's obſervation, that if it were not for the *Bible* and *Common Prayer Book* in the vulgar tongue, we ſhould hardly be able to underſtand any thing, that was written among us an hundred years ago; which is certainly true: for thoſe books being perpetually read in churches, have proved a kind of ſtandard

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for language, eſpecially to the common people. And I doubt, whether the alterations ſince introduced have added much to the beauty or ſtrength of the *Engliſh* tongue, though they have taken off a great deal from that *ſimplicity*, which is one of the greateſt perfections in any language. You, my lord, who are ſo converſant in the ſacred writings, and ſo great a judge of them in their originals, will agree, that no tranſlation our country ever yet produced hath come up to that of the *Old* and *New Teſtament*: and by the many beautiful paſſages, which I have often had the honour to hear your lordſhip cite from thence, I am perſuaded, that the tranſlators of the bible were maſters of an *Engliſh* ſtyle much fitter for that work, than any we ſee in our preſent writings; which I take to be owing to the *ſimplicity* that runs through the whole. Then, as to the greateſt part of our *liturgy*, compiled long before the tranſlation of the *Bible* now in uſe, and little altered ſince; there ſeem to be in it as great ſtrains of true ſublime eloquence, as are any where to be found in our language; which every

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man of good taſte will obſerve in the *communion ſervice*, that of *burial*, and other parts.

But when I ſay, that I would have our language, after it is duly correct, always to laſt, I do not mean that it ſhould never be enlarged. Provided that no word, which a ſociety ſhall give a ſanction to, be afterwards antiquated and exploded, they may have liberty to receive whatever new ones they ſhall find occaſion for; becauſe then the old books will yet be always valuable according to their intrinſick worth, and not thrown aſide on account of unintelligible words and phraſes, which appear harſh and uncouth, only becauſe they are out of faſhion. Had the *Roman* tongue continued vulgar in that city till this time, it would have been abſolutely neceſſary, from the mighty changes that have been made in law and religion, from the many terms of art required in trade and in war, from the new inventions that have happened in the world, from the vaſt ſpreading of navigation and commerce, with many other obvious circumſtances, to have made great additions to that lan-

guage;

guage; yet the ancients would ſtill have been read and underſtood with pleaſure and eaſe. The *Greek* tongue received many enlargements between the time of *Homer* and that of *Plutarch*, yet the former author was probably as well underſtood in *Trajan*'s time as the latter. What *Horace* ſays of *words going off and periſhing like leaves, and new ones coming in their place*, is a misfortune he laments, rather than a thing he approves; but I cannot ſee why this ſhould be abſolutely neceſſary, or if it were, what would have become of his *monumentum ære perennius*.

Writing by memory only, as I do at preſent, I would gladly keep within my depth; and therefore ſhall not enter into further particulars. Neither do I pretend more than to ſhew the uſefulneſs of this deſign, and to make ſome general obſervations, leaving the reſt to that ſociety, which I hope will owe its inſtitution and patronage to your lordſhip. Beſides, I would willingly avoid repetition, having about a year ago communicated to the publick much of what I had to offer upon this ſubject, by the hands of an ingenious gentle-

gentleman, who for a long time did thrice a week divert or inſtruct the kingdom by his papers; and is ſuppoſed to purſue the ſame deſign at preſent under the title of *Spectator*. This author, who hath tried the force and compaſs of our language with ſo much ſucceſs, agrees entirely with me in moſt of my ſentiments relating to it; ſo do the greateſt part of the men of wit and learning, whom I have had the happineſs to converſe with; and therefore I imagine that ſuch a ſociety would be pretty unanimous in the main points.

Your lordſhip muſt allow, that ſuch a work as this brought to perfection would very much contribute to the glory of her majeſty's reign; which ought to be recorded in words more durable than braſs, and ſuch as our poſterity may read a thouſand years hence with pleaſure as well as admiration. I always diſapproved that falſe compliment to princes, that the moſt laſting monument they can have, is the hearts of their ſubjects. It is indeed their greateſt preſent felicity to reign in their ſubjects hearts; but theſe are too periſhable to preſerve their memories, which

can only be done by the pens of able and faithful hiſtorians. And I take it to be your lordſhip's duty, as *prime miniſter*, to give order for inſpecting our language, and rendering it fit to record the hiſtory of ſo great and good a princeſs. Beſides, my lord, as diſintereſted as you appear to the world, I am convinced, that no man is more in the power of a prevailing favourite paſſion than yourſelf; I mean that deſire of true and laſting honour, which you have borne along with you through every ſtage of your life. To this you have often ſacrificed your intereſt, your eaſe and your health: for preſerving and increaſing this you have expoſed your perſon to ſecret treachery and open violence. There is not perhaps an example in hiſtory of any miniſter, who in ſo ſhort a time hath performed ſo many great things, and overcome ſo many difficulties. Now, though I am fully convinced, that you fear God, honour your queen, and love your country, as much as any of your fellow-ſubjects, yet I muſt believe, that the deſire of fame hath been no inconſiderable motive to quicken you

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in the purſuit of thoſe actions, which will beſt deſerve it. But at the ſame time I muſt be ſo plain as to tell your lordſhip, that if you will not take ſome care to ſettle our language, and put it into a ſtate of continuance, I cannot promiſe that your memory ſhall be preſerved above an hundred years, farther than by imperfect tradition.

As barbarous and ignorant as we were in former centuries, there was more effectual care taken by our anceſtors to preſerve the memory of times and perſons, than we find in this age of learning and politeneſs, as we are pleaſed to call it. The rude *Latin* of the *monks* is ſtill very intelligible; whereas, had their records been delivered down only in the vulgar tongue, ſo barren and ſo barbarous, ſo ſubject to continual ſucceeding changes, they could not now be underſtood, unleſs by antiquaries, who make it their ſtudy to expound them. And we muſt at this day have been content with ſuch poor abſtracts of our *Engliſh* ſtory, as laborious men of low genius would think fit to give us: and even theſe in

the next age would be likewiſe ſwallowed up in ſucceeding collections. If things go on at this rate, all I can promiſe your lordſhip, is, that about two hundred years hence ſome painful compiler, who will be at the trouble of ſtudying old language, may inform the world, that in the reign of queen *Anne Robert* earl of *Oxford*, a very wiſe and excellent man, was made *high treaſurer*, and ſaved his country, which in thoſe days was almoſt ruined by a *foreign war*, and a *domeſtick faction*. Thus much he may be able to pick out, and willing to transfer into his new hiſtory; but the reſt of your character, which I or any other writer may now value ourſelves by drawing, and the particular account of the great things done under your miniſtry, for which you are already ſo celebrated in moſt parts of *Europe*, will probably be dropped on account of the antiquated ſtyle and manner they are delivered in.

How then ſhall any man, who hath a genius for hiſtory equal to the beſt of the ancients, be able to undertake ſuch a work with ſpirit and chearfulneſs, when he conſiders

ſiders that he will be read with pleaſure but a very few years, and in an age or two ſhall hardly be underſtood without an interpreter? This is like employing an excellent ſtatuary to work upon mouldering ſtone. Thoſe, who apply their ſtudies to preſerve the memory of others, will always have ſome concern for their own. And I believe it is for this reaſon, that ſo few writers among us of any diſtinction have turned their thoughts to ſuch a diſcouraging employment: for the beſt *Engliſh* hiſtorian muſt lie under this mortification, that when his ſtyle grows antiquated, he will be only conſidered as a tedious relator of facts; and perhaps conſulted in his turn among other neglected authors to furniſh materials for ſome future collector.

I doubt your lordſhip is but ill entertained with a few ſcattered thoughts upon a ſubject, that deſerves to be treated with ability and care: however, I muſt beg leave to add a few words more, perhaps not altogether foreign to the ſame matter. I know not whether that which I am going to ſay may paſs for caution, advice,

or reproach, any of which will be juſtly thought very improper from one in my ſtation to one in yours. However, I muſt venture to affirm, that if genius and learning be not encouraged under your lordſhip's adminiſtration, you are the moſt inexcuſable perſon alive. All your other virtues, my lord, will be defective without this; your affability, candor, and good nature; that perpetual agreeableneſs of converſation, ſo diſengaged in the midſt of ſuch a weight of buſineſs and oppoſition; even your juſtice, prudence, and magnanimity, will ſhine leſs bright without it. Your lordſhip is univerſally allowed to poſſeſs a very large portion in moſt parts of literature; and to this you owe the cultivating thoſe many virtues which otherwiſe would have been leſs adorned, or in lower perfection. Neither can you acquit yourſelf of theſe obligations, without letting the arts in their turn ſhare your influence and protection: beſides, who knows but ſome *true genius* may happen to ariſe under your miniſtry, *exortus ut ætherius ſol.* Every age might perhaps produce one or two of theſe to adorn

adorn it, if they were not ſunk under the cenſure and obloquy of plodding, ſervile, imitating pedants: I do not mean by a true genius any bold writer, who breaks through the rules of decency to diſtinguiſh himſelf by the ſingularity of his opinions: but one, who upon a deſerving ſubject is able to open new ſcenes, and diſcover a vein of true and noble thinking, which never entered into any imagination before: every ſtroke of whoſe pen is worth all the paper blotted by hundreds of others in the compaſs of their lives. I know, my lord, your friends will offer in your defence, that in your private capacity you never refuſed your purſe and credit to the ſervice and ſupport of learned or ingenious men: and that ever ſince you have been in publick employment, you have conſtantly beſtowed your favours to the moſt deſerving perſons. But I deſire your lordſhip not to be deceived; we never will admit of theſe excuſes, nor will allow your private liberality, as great as it is, to attone for your exceſſive publick thrift. But here again I am afraid moſt good ſubjects will interpoſe in your

defence, by alledging the deſperate condition you found the nation in, and the neceſſity there was for ſo able and faithful a ſteward to retrieve it, if poſſible, by the utmoſt frugality. We grant all this, my lord; but then it ought likewiſe to be conſidered, that you have already ſaved ſeveral millions to the publick, and that what we aſk is too inconſiderable to break into any rules of the ſtricteſt good huſbandry. The *French* king beſtows about half a dozen penſions to learned men in ſeveral parts of *Europe*, and perhaps a dozen in his own kingdom; which in the whole do probably not amount to half the income of many a private commoner in *England*, yet have more contributed to the glory of that prince, than any million he hath otherwiſe employed. For learning, like all true merit, is eaſily ſatisfied; whilſt the falſe and counterfeit is perpetually craving, and never thinks it hath enough. The ſmalleſt favour given by a great prince, as a mark of eſteem, to reward the endowments of the mind, never fails to be returned with praiſe and gratitude, and loudly celebrated to the world.

I have known ſome years ago ſeveral penſions given to particular perſons, (how deſervedly I ſhall not inquire) any one of which, if divided into ſmaller parcels, and diſtributed by the crown to thoſe, who might upon occaſion diſtinguiſh themſelves by ſome extraordinary production of wit or learning, would be amply ſufficient to anſwer the end. Or if any ſuch perſons were above money, (as every great *genius* certainly is with very moderate conveniencies of life) a medal, or ſome mark of diſtinction, would do full as well.

But I forget my province, and find myſelf turning projector before I am aware; although it be one of the laſt characters under which I ſhould deſire to appear before your lordſhip, eſpecially when I have the ambition of aſpiring to that of being with the greateſt reſpect and truth,

My Lord,
Your Lordſhip's
moſt obedient, moſt obliged,
and moſt humble ſervant,

London, Feb. 22,
1711-12.

ABOUT

ABOUT a month before the demiſe of queen *Anne*, the dean having laboured to reconcile the miniſters to each other without ſucceſs, retired to the houſe of a friend in *Berkſhire*, and never ſaw them more. But during this retreat he wrote the following treatiſe, which he thought might be of ſome uſe even in that juncture, and ſent it up to *London* to be printed; but, upon ſome difference in opinion between the author and the late lord *Bolingbroke*, the publication was delayed till the queen's death, and then he recalled his copy: it was afterwards placed in the hands of the late alderman *Barber*, from whom it was obtained to be printed. The ruin of the miniſtry by this animoſity among themſelves was long foreſeen and foretold by *Swift*, and it appears by lord *Bolingbroke*'s letter to ſir *William Windham*, that in his heart he renounced his friendſhip for *Oxford* long before the concluſion of the peace, though it did not appear till afterwards. "The peace, ſays "he, which had been judged to be the only ſolid foundation "whereupon we could erect a tory-ſyſtem, and yet when it "was made we found ourſelves at a ſtand; nay the very "work, which ought to have been the baſis of our ſtrength, "was in part demoliſhed before our eyes, and we were ſtoned "with the ruins of it." This event probably rendered the diſunion of the miniſtry viſible; ſome principally endeavouring to ſecure themſelves, ſome ſtill labouring to eſtabliſh at all events the party they had eſpouſed, which ſaw nothing but "encreaſe of mortification and nearer approaches to ruin," and it is not to be wondered, that when this treatiſe was written, the dean's attempts to reconcile his friends were unſucceſsful; for *Bolingbroke* declares, that he abhorred *Oxford* to ſuch a degree, that he would rather have ſuffered baniſhment or death, than have taken meaſures in concert with him to have avoided either.

SOME

SOME FREE THOUGHTS UPON THE PRESENT STATE OF AFFAIRS.

Written in the Year 1714.

WHatever may be thought or practiſed by profound politicians, they will hardly be able to convince the reaſonable part of mankind, that the moſt plain, ſhort, eaſy, ſafe, and lawful way to any good end is not more eligible, than one directly contrary in ſome or all of theſe qualities. I have been frequently aſſured by great miniſters, that politicks were nothing but common ſenſe; which, as it was the only true thing they ſpoke, ſo it was the only thing they could have wiſhed I ſhould not believe. God hath given the bulk of mankind a capacity to underſtand reaſon when it is fairly offered; and by reaſon they would eaſily be governed, if it were left to their choice. Thoſe princes in all ages, who were moſt diſtinguiſhed for their myſterious ſkill in government, found

found by the event, that they had ill conſulted their own quiet, or the eaſe and happineſs of their people; nor hath poſterity remembered them with honour: ſuch as *Lyſander* and *Philip* among the *Greeks*, *Tiberius* in *Rome*, pope *Alexander* the ſixth and his ſon *Cæſar Borgia*, queen *Catherine de Medicis*, *Philip* the ſecond of *Spain*, with many others. Nor are examples leſs frequent of miniſters, famed for men of deep intrigue, whoſe politicks have produced little more than murmurings, factions, and diſcontents, which uſually terminated in the diſgrace and ruin of the authors.

I can recollect but three occaſions in a ſtate, where the talents of ſuch men may be thought neceſſary; I mean in a ſtate where the prince is obeyed and loved by his ſubjects: firſt, in the negociation of a peace; ſecondly, in adjuſting the intereſts of our own country with thoſe of the nations round us, watching the ſeveral motions of our neighbours and allies, and preſerving a due balance among them: laſtly, in the management of parties and factions at home. In the firſt

of

of theſe caſes I have often heard it obſerved, that plain good ſenſe and a firm adherence to the point have proved more effectual than all thoſe arts, which I remember a great foreign miniſter uſed in contempt to call the *ſpirit of negociating*. In the ſecond caſe much wiſdom and a thorough knowledge in affairs both foreign and domeſtick are certainly required: after which I know no talents neceſſary beſides method and ſkill in the common forms of buſineſs. In the laſt caſe, which is that of managing parties, there ſeems indeed to be more occaſion for employing this gift of the lower politicks, whenever the tide runs high againſt the court and miniſtry, which ſeldom happens under any tolerable adminiſtration, while the true intereſt of the nation is purſued. But, here in *England* (for I do not pretend to eſtabliſh maxims of government in general) while the prince and miniſtry, the clergy, the majority of landed-men, and bulk of the people appear to have the ſame views and the ſame principles, it is not obvious to me, how thoſe at the helm can have many

many opportunities of ſhewing their ſkill in myſtery and refinement, beſides what themſelves think fit to create.

I have been aſſured by men long practiſed in buſineſs, that the ſecrets of court are much fewer than we generally ſuppoſe; and I hold it for the greateſt ſecret of court, that they are ſo: becauſe the firſt ſprings of great events, like thoſe of great rivers, are often ſo mean and ſo little, that in decency they ought to be hid: and therefore miniſters are ſo wiſe to leave their proceedings to be accounted for by reaſoners at a diſtance, who often mould them into ſyſtems, that do not only go down very well in the coffee-houſe, but are ſupplies for pamphlets in the preſent age, and may probably furniſh materials for memoirs and hiſtories in the next.

It is true indeed, that even thoſe who are very near the court, and are ſuppoſed to have a large ſhare in the management of publick matters are apt to deduct wrong conſequences by reaſoning upon the cauſes and motives of thoſe actions, wherein themſelves are employed. A great miniſter

miniſter puts you a caſe, and aſks your opinion, but conceals an eſſential circumſtance, upon which the whole weight of the matter turns; then he deſpiſeth your underſtanding for counſelling him no better, and concludes he ought to truſt entirely to his own wiſdom. Thus he grows to abound in ſecrets and reſerves even towards thoſe, with whom he ought to act in the greateſt confidence and concert; and thus the world is brought to judge, that whatever be the iſſue and event, it was all foreſeen, contrived, and brought to paſs by ſome maſter-ſtroke of his politicks.

I could produce innumerable inſtances, from my own memory and obſervation, of events imputed to the profound ſkill and addreſs of a miniſter, which in reality were either the meer effects of negligence, weakneſs, humour, paſſion, or pride, or at beſt, but the natural courſe of things left to themſelves.

During this very ſeſſion of parliament a moſt ingenious gentleman, who hath much credit with thoſe in power, would needs have it, that in the late diſſenſions

at

at court, which grew too high to be any longer a ſecret, the whole matter was carried with the utmoſt dexterity on one ſide, and with manifeſt ill conduct on the other. To prove this he made uſe of the moſt plauſible topicks, drawn from the nature and diſpoſition of the ſeveral perſons concerned, as well as of her majeſty; all which he knows as much of as any man: and gave me a detail of the whole with ſuch an appearance of probability, as committed to writing would paſs for an admirable piece of ſecret hiſtory. Yet I am at the ſame time convinced by the ſtrongeſt reaſons, that the iſſue of thoſe diſſenſions, as to the part they had in the court and houſe of lords, was partly owing to very different cauſes, and partly to the ſituation of affairs, from whence in that conjuncture they could not eaſily terminate otherwiſe than they did, whatever unhappy conſequences they may have for the future.

In like manner I have heard a phyſician pronounce with great gravity, that he had cured ſo many patients of malignant fevers, and as many more of the ſmall-

ſmall-pox; whereas in truth nine parts in ten of thoſe who recovered, owed their lives to the ſtrength of nature and a good conſtitution, while ſuch a one happened to be their doctor.

But, while it is ſo difficult to learn the ſprings and motives of ſome facts, and ſo eaſy to forget the circumſtances of others, it is no wonder they ſhould be ſo groſly miſrepreſented to the publick by curious inquiſitive heads, who proceed altogether upon conjectures, and in reaſoning upon affairs of ſtate are ſure to be miſtaken by ſearching too deep. And as I have known this to be the frequent error of many others, ſo I am ſure it hath been perpetually mine, whenever I have attempted to diſcover the cauſes of political events by refinement and conjecture; which I muſt acknowledge hath very much abated my veneration for what they call *arcana imperii*; whereof I dare pronounce, that the fewer there are in any adminiſtration, it is juſt ſo much the better.

What I have hitherto ſaid, hath by no means been intended to detract from the qualities requiſite in thoſe, who are truſted

with the adminiſtration of publick affairs; on the contrary, I know no ſtation of life, where great abilities and virtues of all kinds are ſo highly neceſſary, and where the want of any is ſo quickly or univerſally felt. A great miniſter hath no virtue for which the publick may not be the better, nor any defect by which the publick is not certainly a ſufferer. I have known more than once or twice within four years paſt, an omiſſion, in appearance very ſmall, prove almoſt fatal to a whole ſcheme, and very hardly retrieved. It is not always ſufficient for the perſon at the helm, that he is intrepid in his nature, free from any tincture of avarice or corruption, and that he hath great natural and acquired abilities.

I never thought the reputation of much ſecrecy was a character of any advantage to a miniſter, becauſe it put all other men upon their guard to be as ſecret as he, and was conſequently the occaſion that perſons and things were always miſrepreſented to him: becauſe likewiſe too great an affectation of ſecrecy is uſually thought to be attended with thoſe little intrigues and refinements, which among

the vulgar denominate a man a great politician; but among others is apt, whether deſervedly or no, to acquire the opinion of cunning: a talent, which differs as much from the true knowledge of government, as that of an attorney from an able lawyer. Neither indeed am I altogether convinced, that this habit of multiplying ſecrets may not be carried on ſo far as to ſtop that communication, which is neceſſary in ſome degree among all who have any conſiderable part in the management of publick affairs: becauſe I have obſerved the inconveniencies ariſing from a want of love between thoſe who were to give directions, to *have* been of as ill conſequence, as any that could happen from the diſcovery of ſecrets. I ſuppoſe, when a building is to be erected, the model may be the contrivance only of one head; and it is ſufficient that the under-workmen be ordered to cut ſtones into certain ſhapes, and place them in certain poſitions: but the ſeveral maſter-builders muſt have ſome general knowledge of the deſign, without which they can give no orders at all.

And, indeed, I do not know a greater mark of an able miniſter, than that of rightly adapting the ſeveral faculties of men; nor is any thing more to be lamented than the impracticableneſs of doing this in any great degree under our preſent circumſtances, while ſo many ſhut themſelves out by adhering to a faction, and while the court is enſlaved to the impatience of others, who deſire to ſell their vote, or their intereſt, as dear as they can. But whether this hath not been ſubmitted to more than was neceſſary, whether it hath not been dangerous in the example, and pernicious in the practice, I will leave to the enquiry of thoſe who can better determine.

It may be matter of no little admiration to conſider in ſome lights the ſtate of affairs among us for four years paſt. The queen finding herſelf and the majority of her kingdom grown weary of the avarice and inſolence, the miſtaken politicks, and deſtructive principles of her former miniſters; calls to the ſervice of the publick another ſet of men, who by confeſſion of their enemies had equal abilities

bilities at leaſt with their predeceſſors; whoſe intereſt made it neceſſary for them (although their inclinations had been otherwiſe) to act upon thoſe maxims which were moſt agreeable to the conſtitution in church and ſtate; whoſe birth and patrimonies gave them weight in the nation; and who (I ſpeak of thoſe who were to have the chief part in affairs) had long lived under the ſtricteſt bonds of friendſhip: with all theſe advantages ſupported by a vaſt majority of the landed intereſt, and the inferior clergy almoſt to a man, we have ſeveral times ſeen the preſent adminiſtration in the greateſt diſtreſs, and very near the brink of ruin, together with the cauſe of the church and monarchy committed to their charge; neither doth it appear to me at the minute I am now writing, that their power or duration are upon any tolerable foot of ſecurity: which I do not ſo much impute to the addreſs and induſtry of their enemies, as to ſome failures among themſelves, which I think have been full as viſible in their cauſes as their effects.

Nothing hath given me greater indig-

nation than to behold a miniſtry, who came with the advantages I have repreſented, acting ever ſince upon the defenſive in the houſe of lords with a majority on their ſide, and inſtead of calling others to account, as it was reaſonably expected, miſpending their time and loſing many opportunities of doing good, becauſe a ſtruggling faction kept them continually in play. This courage among the adverſaries of the court was inſpired into them by various incidents, for every one of which I think the *miniſters*, or, (if that was the caſe) the *miniſter* alone is to anſwer.

For, firſt, that race of politicians, who in the cant phraſe are called the *whimſicals* *, was never ſo numerous, or at leaſt ſo active, as it hath been ſince the great change at court; many of thoſe who pretended wholly to be in with the principles upon which her majeſty and her

* Whimſicals, were tories who had been eager for the concluſion of the peace till the treaties were perfected, then they could come up to no direct approbation; in the clamour raiſed about the danger of the ſucceſſion they joined the whigs and declared directly againſt their party, and affected in moſt other points a moſt glorious neutrality. See *Belin.* Lett. to *Wynd.* p. 48, 49.

new

new ſervants proceeded, either abſenting themſelves with the utmoſt indifference, in thoſe conjunctures whereon the whole cauſe depended, or ſiding directly with the enemy.

I very well remember, when this miniſtry was not above a year old, there was a little murmuring among ſuch as are called the higher tories or churchmen, that quicker progreſs was not made in removing thoſe of the diſcontented party out of employments. I remember likewiſe, the reaſonings upon this matter were various, even among many who were allowed to know a good deal of the inſide of the court; ſome ſuppoſed the queen was at firſt prevailed on to make that great change with no other view, than that of acting for the future upon a *moderating ſcheme* in order to reconcile both parties; and I believe there might poſſibly have been ſome grounds for this ſuppoſition. Others conceived the employments were left undiſpoſed of, in order to keep alive the hopes of many more impatient candidates than ever could be gratified. This hath ſince been looked on

as a very high ſtrain of politicks, and to have ſucceeded accordingly; becauſe it is the opinion of many, that the numerous pretenders to places would never have been kept in order, if all expectation had been cut off. Others were yet more refined; and thought it neither wiſe nor ſafe wholly to extinguiſh all oppoſition from the other ſide; becauſe in the nature of things it was abſolutely neceſſary that there ſhould be parties in an *Engliſh* parliament; and a faction already odious to the people might be ſuffered to continue with leſs danger, than any new one that could ariſe. To confirm this it was ſaid, that the majority in the houſe of commons was too great on the ſide of the high-church, and began to form themſelves into a body (by the name of the *October-club*) in order to put the miniſtry under ſubjection. Laſtly, the danger of introducing too great a number of unexperienced men at once into office, was urged as an irrefragable reaſon for making changes by ſlow degrees. To diſcard an able officer from an employment, or part of a commiſſion, where the revenue

nue or trade were concerned, for no other reaſon but differing in ſome principles of government, might be of terrible conſequence.

However it is certain, that none of theſe excuſes were able to paſs among men, who argued only from the principles of general reaſon. For firſt, they looked upon all ſchemes of comprehenſion to be as viſionary and impoſſible in the ſtate, as in the church. Secondly, while the ſpirit raiſed by the tryal of Dr. *Sacheverell* continued in motion, men were not ſo keen upon coming *in* themſelves, as to ſee their enemies *out*, and deprived of all aſſiſtance to do miſchief: and it is urged further, that this general ambition of hunting after places grew chiefly from ſeeing them ſo long undiſpoſed of, and from too general an encouragement by promiſes to all, who were thought capable of doing either good or hurt. Thirdly, the fear of creating another party in caſe the preſent faction were wholly ſubdued, was in the opinion of plain men, and in regard to the ſituation of our affairs, too great a ſacrifice of the nation's

ſafety

ſafety to the *genius* of politicks; conſidering how much was to be done, and how little time might probably be allowed. Beſides, the diviſion of a houſe of commons into *court* and *country* parties, which was the evil they ſeemed to apprehend, could never be dangerous to a good miniſtry, who had the true intereſt and conſtitution of their country at heart: as for the apprehenſion of too great a majority in the houſe of commons, it appeared to be ſo vain, that upon ſome points of importance the court was hardly able to procure one. And the *October-club*, which appeared ſo formidable at firſt to ſome politicians, proved in the ſequel to be the chief ſupport of thoſe who ſuſpected them. It was likewiſe very well known that the greateſt part of thoſe men, whom the former miniſtry left in poſſeſſion of employments, were loudly charged with inſufficiency or corruption, over and above their obnoxious tenets in religion and government; ſo that it would have been a matter of ſome difficulty to make a worſe choice: beſides, that plea for keeping men of factious principles in employment upon

upon the ſcore of their abilities, was thought to be extended a little too far, and conſtrued to take in all employments whatſoever, although many of them required no more abilities than would ſerve to qualify a gentleman-uſher at court: ſo that this laſt excuſe for the very ſlow ſteps made in diſarming the adverſaries of the crown, was allowed indeed to have more plauſibility, but leſs truth, than any of the former.

I do not here pretend to condemn the counſels or actions of the preſent miniſtry: their ſafety and intereſt are viſibly united with thoſe of the publick, they are perſons of unqueſtionable abilities, altogether unſuſpected of avarice or corruption, and have the advantage to be further recommended by the dread and hatred of the oppoſite faction. However, it is manifeſt that the zeal of their friends hath been cooling towards them for above two years paſt: they have been frequently deſerted or diſtreſſed upon the moſt preſſing occaſions, and very near giving up in deſpair: their characters have been often treated with the utmoſt barbarity and injuſtice

juſtice in both houſes by ſcurrilous and enraged orators; while their neareſt friends, and even thoſe who muſt have a ſhare in their diſgrace, never offered a word in their vindication.

When I examine with myſelf what occaſions the miniſtry may have given for this coldneſs, inconſtancy and diſcontent among their friends, I at the ſame time recollect the various conjectures, reaſonings and ſuſpicions, which have run ſo freely for three years paſt, concerning the deſigns of the court: I do not only mean ſuch conjectures, as are born in a coffee-houſe, or invented by the malice of a party; but alſo the concluſions (however miſtaken) of wiſe and good men, whoſe quality and ſtation fitted them to underſtand the reaſon of publick proceedings, and in whoſe power it lay to recommend or diſgrace an adminiſtration to the people. I muſt therefore take the boldneſs to aſſert, that all theſe diſcontents, how ruinous ſoever they may prove in the conſequences, have moſt unneceſſarily ariſen from the want of a due *communication* and *concert*. Every man muſt have a light ſuffi-

ſufficient for the length of the way he is appointed to go: there is a degree of confidence due to all ſtations; and a petty conſtable will neither act chearfully or wiſely without that ſhare of it which properly belongs to him: although the main ſpring in a watch be out of ſight, there is an intermediate communication between it and the ſmalleſt wheel, or elſe no uſeful motion could be performed. This reſerved myſterious way of acting upon points, where there appeared not the leaſt occaſion for it, and towards perſons, who at leaſt, in right of their poſts, expected a more open treatment, was imputed to ſome hidden deſign, which every man conjectured to be the very thing he was moſt afraid of. Thoſe who profeſſed the height of what is called the church principle, ſuſpected, that a *comprehenſion* was intended, wherein the *moderate* men on both ſides might be equally employed. Others went farther, and dreaded ſuch a comprehenſion, as directly tended to bring the old exploded principles and perſons once more into play. Again, ſome affected

ted to be uneaſy about the ſucceſſion, and ſeemed to think there was a view of introducing that perſon, whatever he is, who pretends to claim the crown by inheritance. Others, eſpecially of late, ſurmiſed on the contrary, that the demands of the houſe of *Hanover* were induſtriouſly fomented by ſome in power, without the privity of the——or——. Now, although theſe accuſations were too inconſiſtent to be all of them true, yet they were maliciouſly ſuffered to paſs, and thereby took off much of that popularity, which thoſe at the helm ſtood in need of to ſupport them under the difficulties of a long perplexing negociation, a daily addition of publick debts, and an exhauſted treaſury.

But the effects of this myſtical manner of proceeding did not end here: for, the late diſſenſions between the great men at court (which have been, for ſome time paſt, the publick entertainment of every coffee-houſe) are ſaid to have ariſen from the ſame fountain; while on one ſide very great reſerve, and certainly very great reſent-

ſentment on the other *, if we may believe general report (for I pretend to know no farther) have enflamed animoſities to ſuch a height, as to make all reconcilement impracticable. Suppoſing this to be true, it may ſerve for a great leſſon of humiliation to mankind, to behold the habits and paſſions of men otherwiſe highly accompliſhed, triumphing over intereſt, friendſhip, honour, and their own perſonal ſafety, as well as that of their country, and probably of a moſt gracious princeſs who hath entruſted it to them. A ſhip's crew quarreling in a ſtorm, or while their enemies are within gun-ſhot, is but a faint idea of this fatal infatuation: of which, although it be hard to ſay enough, ſome people may think perhaps I have already ſaid too much.

Since this unhappy incident, the deſertion of friends and loſs of reputation have been ſo great, that I do not ſee how the miniſters could have continued many weeks in their ſtations, if their oppoſers of all kinds had agreed about the methods

* Lord *Orford*'s reſerve was the cauſe of *Bolingbroke*'s reſentment.

by

by which they ſhould be ruined: and their preſervation hitherto ſeems to reſemble his, who had two poiſons given him together of contrary operations.

It may ſeem very impertinent in one of my level to point out to thoſe, who ſit at the helm, what courſe they ought to ſteer. I know enough of courts to be ſenſible, how mean an opinion great miniſters have of moſt men's underſtanding; to a degree, that in any other ſcience would be called the groſſeſt pedantry. However, unleſs I offer my ſentiments in this point, all I have hitherto ſaid, will be to no purpoſe.

The general wiſhes and deſires of a people are perhaps more obvious to other men, than to miniſters of ſtate. There are two points of the higheſt importance, wherein a very great majority of the kingdom appear perfectly hearty and unanimous. Firſt, that the church of *England* ſhould be preſerved entire in all her rights, powers and privileges; all doctrines relating to government diſcouraged, which ſhe condemns; all ſchiſms, ſects and hereſies diſcountenanced and kept under due ſubjection, as far as conſiſts with the lenity

of

of our conſtitution; her open enemies (among whom I include at leaſt diſſenters of all denominations) not truſted with the ſmalleſt degree of civil or military power; and her ſecret adverſaries under the names of whigs, low-church, republicans, moderation-men and the like, receive no marks of favour from the crown, but what they ſhould deſerve by a ſincere reformation.

Had this point been ſteadily purſued in all its parts, for three years paſt, and aſſerted as the avowed reſolution of the court, there muſt probably have been an end of faction, which hath been able ever ſince with ſo much vigour to diſturb and inſult the adminiſtration. I know very well, that ſome refiners pretend to argue for the uſefulneſs of parties in ſuch a government as ours: I have ſaid ſomething of this already, and have heard a great many idle wiſe topicks upon the ſubject. But I ſhall not argue that matter at preſent: I ſuppoſe, if a man thinks it neceſſary to *play* with a *ſerpent*, he will chuſe one of a kind that is leaſt miſchievous; otherwiſe, although it appears to

be cruſhed, it may have life enough to ſting him to death. So, I think it is not ſafe tampering with the preſent faction, at leaſt in this juncture: firſt, becauſe their principles and practices have been already very dangerous to the conſtitution in church and ſtate: ſecondly, becauſe they are highly irritated with the loſs of their power, full of venom and vengeance, and prepared to execute every thing that rage or malice can ſuggeſt: but principally, becauſe they have prevailed by miſrepreſentations and other artifices to make the ſucceſſor look upon them as the only perſons he can truſt: upon which account they cannot be too ſoon, or too much diſabled: neither will *England* ever be ſafe from the attempts of this wicked confederacy, until their ſtrength and intereſt ſhall be ſo far reduced, that for the future it ſhall not be in the power of the crown, although in conjunction with any rich and factious body of men, to chuſe an ill majority in the houſe of commons.

One ſtep very neceſſary to this great work will be to regulate the army, and chiefly

chiefly thoſe troops which in their turns have the care of her majeſty's perſon; who are moſt of them fitter to guard a prince under an *high court of juſtice*, than ſeated on the throne. The peculiar hand of providence hath hitherto preſerved her majeſty, encompaſſed, whether ſleeping or travelling, by her enemies: but ſince religion teacheth us, that providence ought not to be tempted, it is ill-venturing to truſt that precious life any longer to thoſe, who by their publick behaviour and diſcourſe diſcover their impatience to ſee it at an end; that they may have liberty to be the inſtruments of glutting at once the revenge of their patrons and their own. It ſhould be well remembered, what a ſatisfaction theſe gentlemen (after the example of their betters) were ſo ſanguine to expreſs upon the queen's laſt illneſs at *Windſor*, and what threatenings they uſed of refuſing to obey their general, in caſe that illneſs had proved fatal. Nor do I think it a want of charity to ſuſpect, that in ſuch an evil day an enraged faction would be highly pleaſed with the power of the ſword, and with great con-

nivance leave it ſo long unſheathed, until they were got rid of their moſt formidable adverſaries. In the mean time it muſt be a very melancholy proſpect, that whenever it ſhall pleaſe God to viſit us with this calamity, thoſe who are paid to be defenders of the civil power, will ſtand ready for any acts of violence, that a *Junta* compoſed of the greateſt enemies to the conſtitution ſhall think fit to enjoin them.

The other point of great importance is the ſecurity of the proteſtant ſucceſſion in the houſe of *Hanover*: not from any partiality to that illuſtrious houſe, further than as it hath had the honour to mingle with the blood royal of *England*, and is the neareſt branch of our regal line reformed from popery. This point hath one advantage over the former, that both parties profeſs to deſire the ſame bleſſing for poſterity, but differ about the means of ſecuring it. From whence it hath come to paſs, that the proteſtant ſucceſſion, in appearance the deſire of the whole nation, hath proved the greateſt topick of ſlander, jealouſy, ſuſpicion and diſcontent.

I have

I have been ſo curious to aſk ſeveral acquaintance among the oppoſite party, whether they, or their leaders, did really ſuſpect there had been ever any deſign in the miniſtry to weaken the ſucceſſion in favour of the *pretender*, or of any other perſon whatſoever. Some of them freely anſwered in the negative: others were of the ſame opinion, but added, they did not know what might be done in time, and upon farther provocations; others again ſeemed to believe the affirmative, but could never produce any plauſible grounds for their belief. I have likewiſe been aſſured by a perſon of ſome conſequence, that during a very near and conſtant familiarity with the great men at court for four years paſt, he never could obſerve, even in thoſe hours of converſation where there is uſually leaſt reſtraint, that one word ever paſſed among them to ſhew a diſlike to the preſent ſettlement; although they would ſometimes lament, that the falſe repreſentations of their's and the kingdom's enemies had made ſome impreſſions in the mind of the ſucceſſor. As to my own circle of acquaintance I can

ſafely affirm, that excepting thoſe who are *nonjurors* by profeſſion, I have not met with above two perſons who appeared to have any ſcruples concerning the preſent limitation of the crown. I therefore think it may very impartially be pronounced, that the number of thoſe, who wiſh to ſee the ſon of the abdicated prince upon the throne, is altogether inconſiderable. And further, I believe it will be found, that there are none who ſo much dread any attempt he ſhall make for the recovery of his imagined rights, as the *Roman-Catholicks* of *England*; who love their freedom and properties too well to deſire his entrance by a *French* army, and a field of blood; who muſt continue upon the ſame foot if he changeth his religion, and muſt expect to be the firſt and greateſt ſufferers if he ſhould happen to fail.

As to the perſon of this nominal prince, he lies under all manner of diſadvantages: the vulgar imagine him to have been a child impoſed upon the nation by the fraudulent zeal of his parents and their bigotted counſellors; who took ſpecial care, againſt all the rules of common policy,

licy, to educate him in their hateful ſuperſtition, ſucked in with his milk and confirmed in his manhood, too ſtrong to be now ſhaken by Mr. *Leſley* *; and a counterfeit converſion will be too groſs to paſs upon the kingdom, after what we have ſeen and ſuffered from the like practice in his father. He is likewiſe ſaid to be of weak intellectuals, and an unſound conſtitution: he was treated contemptibly enough by the young princes of *France*, even during the war; is now wholly neglected by that crown, and driven to live in exile upon a ſmall exhibition: he is utterly unknown in *England*, which he left in the cradle: his father's friends are moſt of them dead, the reſt antiquated or poor. Six and twenty years have almoſt paſt ſince the *revolution*, and the bulk of thoſe who are now moſt in action either at court, in parliament, or publick offices, were then boys at ſchool or the univerſities, and look upon that great change to have happened

* *Leſley* was a nonjuring clergyman, who wrote a letter from *Barleduc* in *Lorrain*, the place of the pretender's reſidence, addreſſed to a member of parliament in *London*, in praiſe and on behalf of his prince. The letter was printed and publickly handed about in *London*.

during a period of time for which they are not accountable. The logick of the higheſt tories is now, that this was the eſtabliſhment they found, as ſoon as they arrived to a capacity of judging; that they had no hand in turning out the late king, and therefore have no crime to anſwer for, if it were any: that the inheritance to the crown is fixed in purſuance of laws made ever ſince their remembrance, by which all papiſts are excluded, and they have no other rule to go by: that they will no more diſpute king *William* the *Third*'s title, than king *William* the *Firſt*'s; ſince they muſt have recourſe to hiſtory for both: that they have been inſtructed in the doctrines of paſſive obedience, non-reſiſtance, and hereditary right, and find them all neceſſary for preſerving the preſent eſtabliſhment in church and ſtate, and for continuing the ſucceſſion in the houſe of *Hanover*, and muſt in their own opinion renounce all thoſe doctrines by ſetting up any other title to the crown. This, I ſay, ſeems to be the political creed of all the high-principled men I have

have for ſome time met with of forty years old and under; which although I do not pretend to juſtify in every part, yet I am ſure it ſets the proteſtant ſucceſſion upon a much firmer foundation, than all the indigeſted ſchemes of thoſe who profeſs to act upon what they call *revolution principles*.

Neither ſhould it perhaps be ſoon forgotten, that during the greateſt licentiouſneſs of the preſs, while the ſacred character of the queen was every day inſulted in factious papers and ballads, not the leaſt reflecting inſinuation ever appeared againſt the *Hanover* family, whatever occaſion was offered to intemperate pens by the raſhneſs or indiſcretion of one or two miniſters from thence.

From all theſe conſiderations I muſt therefore lay it down as an unconteſtable truth, that the ſucceſſion to theſe kingdoms in the illuſtrious houſe of *Hanover* is as firmly ſecured as the nature of the thing can poſſibly admit; by the oaths of all thoſe who are entruſted with any office, by the very principles of thoſe who are termed the *high-church*, by the general

general inclinations of the people, by the inſignificancy of that perſon who claims it from inheritance, and the little aſſiſtance he can expect either from princes abroad or adherents at home.

However, ſince the virulent oppoſers of the queen and her adminiſtration have ſo far prevailed by their emiſſaries at the court of *Hanover*, and by their practices upon one or two ignorant, unmannerly *meſſengers* from thence, as to make the *elector* deſire ſome farther ſecurity, and ſend over a *memorial* here to that end: the great queſtion is how to give reaſonable ſatisfaction to his highneſs, and (what is infinitely of greater conſequence) at the ſame time conſult the honour and ſafety of the queen, whoſe quiet *poſſeſſion* is of much more conſequence to us of the preſent age, than his *reverſion*. The ſubſtance of his *memorial*, if I retain it right, is to deſire that ſome one of his family might live in *England*, with ſuch a maintenance as is uſual to thoſe of the royal blood, and that certain *titles* ſhould be conferred upon the reſt according to antient cuſtom. The *memorial* doth not

ſpecify

ſpecify which of the family ſhould be invited to reſide here; and if it had, I believe however, her majeſty would have looked upon it as a circumſtance left to her own choice.

But, as all this is moſt manifeſtly unneceſſary in itſelf, and only in compliance with the miſtaken doubts of a preſumptive heir; ſo the nation would (to ſpeak in the language of Mr. *Steel)* EXPECT, that her majeſty ſhould be made perfectly eaſy from that ſide for the future; no more to be alarmed with apprehenſions of *viſits*, or *demands of writs*, where * ſhe hath not thought fit to give any *invitation*. The nation would likewiſe *expect*, that there ſhould be an end of all private commerce between that court and the leaders of a party here; and, that his electoral *highneſs* ſhould *declare* himſelf entirely ſatisfied with all her majeſty's proceedings, her treaties of peace and commerce, her alliances abroad, her choice of miniſters at home,

* Baron *Schutz*, envoy extraordinary from the elector of *Hanover*, demanded a *writ* for the electoral prince to ſit in the houſe of peers as duke of *Cambridge*, and it was expected that his highneſs would have made a viſit to the court of *London*.

and

and particularly in her moſt gracious condeſcenſions to his requeſt: that he would upon all proper occaſions, and in the moſt publick manner, diſcover his utter diſlike of factious perſons and principles, but eſpecially of that party, which under the pretence or ſhelter of his protection hath ſo long diſquieted the kingdom: and laſtly, that he would acknowledge the goodneſs of the queen, and juſtice of the nation, in ſo fully ſecuring the ſucceſſion to his family.

It is indeed a problem which I could never comprehend, why the court of *Hanover*, who have all along thought themſelves ſo perfectly ſecure in the affections, the principles, and the profeſſions of the *low-church* party, ſhould not have endeavoured, according to the uſual politicks of princes, to gain over thoſe who were repreſented as their enemies; ſince theſe ſuppoſed enemies had made ſo many advances, were in poſſeſſion of all the power, had framed the very ſettlement to which that illuſtrious family owes its claim; had all of them abjured the pretender; were now employed in the

the great offices of ſtate, and compoſed a majority in both houſes of parliament. Not to mention, that the queen herſelf, with the bulk of the landed gentry and commonalty throughout the kingdom, were of the number. This one would think might be a ſtrength ſufficient not only to *obſtruct* but to *beſtow* a ſucceſſion: and ſince the preſumed heir could not but be perfectly ſecure of the other party, whoſe greateſt avowed grievance was the pretended danger of his future rights; it might therefore ſurely have been worth his while to have made at leaſt one ſtep towards cultivating a fair correſpondence with the power in poſſeſſion. Neither could thoſe, who are called his friends, have blamed him, or with the leaſt decency enter into any engagements for defeating his title.

But why may not the reaſons of this proceeding in the elector be directly contrary to what is commonly imagined? Methinks I could endeavour to believe, that his highneſs is thoroughly acquainted with both parties; is convinced, that no true member of the church of *England*

land can eaſily be ſhaken in his principles of loyalty, or forget the obligation of an oath, by any provocation. That *theſe* are therefore the people he intends to rely upon, and keeps only fair with the *others* from a *true* notion he hath of their doctrines, which prompt them to forget their duty upon every motive of intereſt or ambition. If this conjecture be right, his highneſs cannot ſure but entertain a very high eſteem of ſuch miniſters, who continue to act under the dread and appearance of a ſucceſſor's utmoſt diſpleaſure, and the threats of an enraged faction, whom he is ſuppoſed alone to favour, and to be guided entirely in his judgment of *Britiſh* affairs and perſons by their opinions.

But to return from this digreſſion: the preſence of that infant prince * among us could not, I think, in any ſort be inconſiſtent with the ſafety of the queen; he would be in no danger of being corrupted in his principles, or expoſed in his perſon by vicious companions; he

* The infant prince was the ſon of the electoral prince of *Hanover*, who might be choſen to reſide here in conſequence of the memorial. See p. 250.

could

could be at the head of no factious clubs and cabals, nor be attended by a hired rabble, which his flatterers might repreſent as popularity. He would have none of that impatience which the frailty of human nature gives to expecting heirs. There would be no pretence for men to make their court by affecting *German* modes and *refinements* in dreſs or behaviour: nor would there be an occaſion of inſinuating to him, how much more his levee was frequented, than the anti-chambers of *St. James's*. Add to all this, the advantages of being educated in our religion, laws, language, manners, nature of the government, each ſo very different from thoſe he would leave behind. By which likewiſe he might be highly uſeful to his father, if that prince ſhould happen to ſurvive her majeſty.

The late king *William*, who after his marriage with the lady *Mary* of *England*, could have no probable expectation of the crown, and very little even of being a queen's huſband (the duke of *York* having a young wife) was no ſtranger to our language or manners, and went

went often to the chapel of his princeſs; which I obſerve the rather, becauſe I could heartily wiſh the like diſpoſition were in another court, and becauſe it may be diſagreeable to a prince to take up new doctrines on a ſudden, or ſpeak to his ſubjects by an interpreter.

An ill natured or inquiſitive man may ſtill, perhaps, deſire to preſs the queſtion further by aſking, what is to be done, in caſe it ſhould ſo happen, that this malevolent working party at home hath credit enough with the court of *Hanover* to continue the ſuſpicion, jealouſy, and uneaſineſs there againſt the queen and her miniſtry; to make ſuch demands be ſtill inſiſted on, as are by no means thought proper to be complied with; and in the mean time to ſtand at arm's length with her majeſty, and in cloſe conjunction with thoſe who oppoſe her.

I take the anſwer to be eaſy: in all conteſts the ſafeſt way is to put thoſe, we diſpute with, as much *in the wrong* as we can. When her majeſty ſhall have offered ſuch or the like conceſſions as I have

have above mentioned, in order to remove thoſe ſcruples artificially raiſed in the mind of the expectant heir, and to divide him from that faction by which he is ſuppoſed to have been miſled; ſhe hath done as much as any prince can do, and more than any other would probably do in her caſe; and will be juſtified before God and man, whatever be the event. The equitable part of thoſe, who now ſide againſt the court, will probably be more temperate; and, if a due diſpatch be made in placing the civil and military power in the hands of ſuch as wiſh well to the conſtitution, it cannot be any way for the quiet or intereſt of a ſucceſſor to gratify ſo ſmall a faction, as will probably then remain, at the expence of a much more numerous and conſiderable part of his ſubjects. Neither do I ſee how the principles of ſuch a party, either in religion or government, will prove very agreeable, becauſe I think *Luther* and *Calvin* ſeem to have differed as much as any two among the reformers: and, becauſe a *German* prince will probably be ſuſpicious of

thoſe, who think they can never depreſs the prerogative enough.

But ſuppoſing, once for all, as far as poſſible, that the *elector* ſhould utterly refuſe to be upon any terms of confidence with the preſent miniſtry, and all others of their principles, as enemies to him and the ſucceſſion; nor eaſy with the queen herſelf: but upon ſuch conditions as will not be thought *conſiſtent with her ſafety and honour*: and continue to place all his hopes and truſt in the diſcontented party. I think it were humbly to be wiſhed, that whenever the ſucceſſion ſhall take place, the alterations intended by the new prince ſhould be made by *himſelf*, and not by his *deputies*: becauſe I am of opinion, that the clauſe empowering the ſucceſſor to appoint a *latent*, *unlimited* number, additional to the ſeven *regents* named in the *act*, went upon a ſuppoſition, that the *ſecret committee* would be of ſuch, whoſe enmity and contrary principles diſpoſed them to confound the reſt. King *William*, whoſe title was much more controverted than that of her majeſty's

ſucceſſor

ſucceſſor can ever probably be; did for ſeveral years leave the adminiſtration of the kingdom in the hands of lords juſtices, during the heighth of a war, and while the abdicated prince himſelf was frequently attempting an invaſion: from whence one might imagine, that the regents appointed by parliament upon the demiſe of the crown would be able to keep the peace during an abſence of a *few* weeks without any *colleagues*. However, I am pretty confident that the only reaſon, why a power was given of chuſing *dormant* viceroys, was to take away all pretence of a neceſſity to invite over *any* of the family here, during her majeſty's life. So that I do not well apprehend what arguments the *elector* can uſe to inſiſt upon *both*.

To conclude; the only way of ſecuring the conſtitution in church and ſtate, and conſequently this very proteſtant ſucceſſion itſelf, will be by leſſening the power of our domeſtic adverſaries as much as can poſſibly conſiſt with the lenity of our government; and, if this be not ſpeedily done, it will be eaſy to point

where the nation is to fix the blame: for we are well aſſured, that ſince the account her majeſty received of the cabals, the triumphs, the inſolent behaviour of the whole faction during her late illneſs at *Windſor*, ſhe hath been as willing to ſee them deprived of all power to do miſchief, as any of her moſt zealous and loyal ſubjects can deſire.

THOUGHTS

THOUGHTS

ON

VARIOUS SUBJECTS.

WE have juſt enough religion to make us hate, but not enough to make us love one-another.

Reflect on things paſt, as wars, negociations, factions, *etc.* we enter ſo little into thoſe intereſts, that we wonder how men could poſſibly be ſo buſy and concerned for things ſo tranſitory; look on the preſent times, we find the ſame humour, yet wonder not at all.

A wiſe man endeavours, by conſidering all circumſtances, to make conjectures, and form concluſions; but the ſmalleſt accident intervening (and in the courſe of affairs it is impoſſible to foreſee all) does often produce ſuch turns and changes, that at laſt he is juſt as much in doubt of events as the moſt ignorant and unexperienced perſon.

Poſitiveneſs is a good quality for preachers and orators, becauſe he that would obtrude his thoughts and reaſons upon a

multitude, will convince others the more, as he appears convinced himſelf.

How is it poſſible to expect that mankind will take advice, when they will not ſo much as take warning?

I forget whether advice be among the loſt things, which *Ariſto* ſays are to be found in the moon; that and time ought to have been there.

No preacher is liſtened to but time, which gives us the ſame train and turn of thought, that elder people have tried in vain to put into our heads before.

When we deſire or ſollicit any thing, our minds run wholly on the good ſide or circumſtances of it; when it is obtained, our minds run wholly on the bad ones.

In a *glaſs-houſe* the workmen often fling in a ſmall quantity of freſh coals, which ſeems to diſturb the fire, but very much enlivens it. This ſeems to allude to a gentle ſtirring of the paſſions, that the mind may not languiſh.

Religion ſeems to have grown an infant with age, and requires miracles to nurſe it, as it had in its infancy.

All

All fits of pleaſure are balanced by an equal degree of pain or languor; it is like ſpending this year part of the next year's revenue.

The latter part of a wiſe man's life is taken up in curing the follies, prejudices, and falſe opinions he had contracted in the former.

Would a writer know how to behave himſelf with relation to poſterity, let him conſider in old books what he finds that he is glad to know, and what omiſſions he moſt laments.

Whatever the poets pretend, it is plain they give immortality to none but themſelves: it is *Homer* and *Virgil* we reverence and admire, not *Achilles* or *Æneas*. With hiſtorians it is quite the contrary; our thoughts are taken up with the actions, perſons, and events we read, and we little regard the authors.

When a true genius appears in the world, you may know him by this ſign, that the dunces are all in confederacy againſt him.

Men who poſſeſs all the advantages of life, are in a ſtate where there are many

accidents to diſorder and diſcompoſe, but few to pleaſe them.

It is unwiſe to puniſh cowards with ignominy; for if they had regarded that, they would not have been cowards: death is their proper puniſhment, becauſe they fear it moſt.

The greateſt inventions were produced in the times of ignorance; as the uſe of the *compaſs*, *gunpowder*, and *printing*; and by the dulleſt nation, as the *Germans*.

One argument to prove that the common relations of *ghoſts* and *ſpectres* are generally falſe, may be drawn from the opinion held, that ſpirits are never ſeen by more than one perſon at a time; that is to ſay, it ſeldom happens to above one perſon in a company to be poſſeſſed with any high degree of ſpleen or melancholy.

I am apt to think, that in the day of judgment there will be ſmall allowance given to the wiſe for their want of morals, and to the ignorant for their want of faith, becauſe both are without excuſe. This renders the advantages equal of ignorance and knowledge. But ſome ſcruples in the wiſe, and ſome vices in the ignorant,

rant, will perhaps be forgiven upon the ſtrength of temptation to each.

The value of ſeveral circumſtances in ſtory leſſens very much by diſtance of time, though ſome minute circumſtances are very valuable; and it requires great judgment in a writer to diſtinguiſh.

It is grown a word of courſe for writers to ſay, This critical age, as divines ſay, This ſinful age.

It is pleaſant to obſerve how free the preſent age is in laying taxes on the next: *Future ages ſhall talk of this*; *this ſhall be famous to all poſterity*: whereas their time and thoughts will be taken up about preſent things, as ours are now.

The *camelion*, who is ſaid to feed upon nothing but air, hath of all animals the nimbleſt tongue.

When a man is made a ſpiritual peer he loſes his ſir-name; when a temporal, his chriſtian-name.

It is in diſputes as in armies, where the weaker ſide ſets up falſe lights, and makes a great noiſe, to make the enemy believe them more numerous and ſtrong than they really are.

Some

Some men, under the notions of weeding out prejudices, eradicate virtue, honeſty, and religion.

In all well-inſtituted commonwealths, care has been taken to limit mens poſſeſſions; which is done for many reaſons, and among the reſt, for one which perhaps is not often conſidered, that when bounds are ſet to mens deſires, after they have acquired as much as the laws will permit them, their private intereſt is at an end, and they have nothing to do but to take care of the publick.

There are but three ways for a man to revenge himſelf of the cenſure of the world; to deſpiſe it, to return the like, or to endeavour to live ſo as to avoid it: the firſt of theſe is uſually pretended, the laſt is almoſt impoſſible, the univerſal practice is for the ſecond.

Herodotus tells us, that in cold countries beaſts very ſeldom have horns, but in hot they have very large ones. This might bear a pleaſant application.

I never heard a finer piece of ſatire againſt *lawyers*, than that of *aſtrologers*, when they pretend by rules of art to tell

tell when a ſuit will end, and whether to the advantage of the plaintiff or defendant; thus making the matter depend entirely upon the influence of the ſtars, without the leaſt regard to the merits of the cauſe.

The expreſſion in *Apocrypha* about *Tobit* and his dog following him I have often heard ridiculed, yet *Homer* has the ſame words of *Telemachus* more than once; and *Virgil* ſays ſomething like it of *Evander*. And I take the book of *Tobit* to be partly poetical.

I have known ſome men poſſeſſed of good qualities, which were very ſerviceable to others, but uſeleſs to themſelves; like a ſun-dial on the front of a houſe, to inform the neighbours and paſſengers, but not the owner within.

If a man would regiſter all his opinions upon love, politicks, religion, learning, *etc.* beginning from his youth and ſo go on to old age, what a bundle of inconſiſtencies and contradictions would appear at laſt?

What they do in heaven we are ignorant of; what they do not we are told expreſly,

preſly, that they neither marry, nor are given in marriage.

When a man obſerves the choice of ladies now-a-days in the diſpenſing of their favours, can he forbear paying ſome veneration to the memory of thoſe mares mentioned by *Xenophon* *, who, while their manes were on, that is, while they were in their beauty, would never admit the embraces of an aſs.

It is a miſerable thing to live in ſuſpence; it is the life of a ſpider.

Vive quidem, pende tamen, improba, dixit. Ovid Metam.

The ſtoical ſcheme of ſupplying our wants by lopping off our deſires, is like cutting off our feet when we want ſhoes.

Phyſicians ought not to give their judgment of religion, for the ſame reaſon that butchers are not admitted to be jurors upon life and death.

The reaſon, why ſo few marriages are happy, is becauſe young ladies ſpend their time in making nets, not in making cages.

If a man will obſerve as he walks the

* *De Re Equeſtri.*

ſtreets,

ſtreets, I believe he will find the merrieſt countenances in mourning-coaches.

Nothing more unqualifies a man to act with prudence, than a misfortune that is attended with ſhame and guilt.

The power of fortune is confeſſed only by the miſerable; for the happy impute all their ſucceſs to prudence or merit.

Ambition often puts men upon doing the meaneſt offices; ſo climbing is performed in the ſame poſture with creeping.

Ill company is like a dog, who dirts thoſe moſt whom he loves beſt.

Cenſure is the tax a man pays to the publick for being eminent.

Although men are accuſed for not knowing their own weakneſs, yet perhaps as few know their own ſtrength. It is in men as in ſoils, where ſometimes there is a vein of gold which the owner knows not of.

Satire is reckoned the eaſieſt of all wit; but I take it to be otherwiſe in very bad times: for it is as hard to ſatirize well a man of diſtinguiſhed vices, as to praiſe well a man of diſtinguiſhed virtues. It is

eaſy

eaſy enough to do either to people of moderate characters.

Invention is the talent of youth, and judgment of age; ſo that our judgment grows harder to pleaſe, when we have fewer things to offer it: this goes through the whole commerce of life. When we are old, our friends find it difficult to pleaſe us, and are leſs concerned whether we be pleaſed or no.

No wiſe man ever wiſhed to be younger.

An idle reaſon leſſens the weight of the good ones you gave before.

The motives of the beſt actions will not bear too ſtrict an enquiry. It is allowed, that the cauſe of moſt actions, good or bad, may be reſolved into the love of ourſelves; but the ſelf-love of ſome men inclines them to pleaſe others; and the ſelf-love of others is wholly employed in pleaſing themſelves. This makes the great diſtinction between virtue and vice. Religion is the beſt motive of all actions, yet religion is allowed to be the higheſt inſtance of ſelf-love.

When the world has once begun to uſe us ill, it afterwards continues the ſame treatment

treatment with leſs ſcruple or ceremony, as men do to a whore.

Old men view beſt at a diſtance with the eyes of their underſtanding as well as with thoſe of nature.

Some people take more care to hide their wiſdom than their folly.

Arbitrary power is the natural object of temptation to a prince, as wine or women to a young fellow, or a bribe to a judge, or avarice to old age, or vanity to a woman.

Anthony Henly's farmer dying of an *aſthma*, ſaid, well, if I can get this breath once *out*, I'll take care it ſhall never get *in* again.

The humour of exploding many things under the name of trifles, fopperies, and only imaginary goods, is a very falſe proof either of wiſdom or magnanimity, and a great check to virtuous actions. For inſtance, with regard to fame: there is in moſt people a reluctance and unwillingneſs to be forgotten. We obſerve even among the vulgar, how fond they are to have an inſcription over their grave. It requires but little philoſophy to diſcover and obſerve

ſerve that there is no intrinſick value in all this; however, if it be founded in our nature, as an incitement to virtue, it ought not to be ridiculed.

Complaint is the largeſt tribute heaven receives, and the ſincereſt part of our devotion.

The common fluency of ſpeech in many men, and moſt women, is owing to a ſcarcity of matter, and a ſcarcity of words; for whoever is a maſter of language, and hath a mind full of ideas, will be apt in ſpeaking to heſitate upon the choice of both; whereas common ſpeakers have only one ſet of ideas, and one ſet of words to cloath them in; and theſe are always ready at the mouth: ſo people come faſter out of a church when it is almoſt empty, than when a crowd is at the door.

Few are qualified to *ſhine* in company; but it is in moſt mens power to be agreeable. The reaſon therefore, why converſation runs ſo low at preſent, is not the defect of underſtanding, but pride, vanity, ill-nature, affectation, ſingularity, poſitiveneſs,

tiveneſs, or ſome other vice, the effect of a wrong education.

To be vain is rather a mark of humility than pride. Vain men delight in telling what honours have been done them, what great company they have kept, and the like, by which they plainly confeſs that theſe honours were more than their due, and ſuch as their friends would not believe if they had not been told: whereas a man truly proud thinks the greateſt honours below his merit, and conſequently ſcorns to boaſt. I therefore deliver it as a maxim, that whoever deſires the character of a proud man, ought to conceal his vanity.

Law, in a free country, is, or ought to be, the determination of the majority of thoſe who have property in land.

One argument uſed to the diſadvantage of providence, I take to be a very ſtrong one in its defence. It is objected, that ſtorms and tempeſts, unfruitful ſeaſons, ſerpents, ſpiders, flies, and other noxious or troubleſome animals, with many more inſtances of the like kind, diſcover an imperfection in nature, becauſe

human life would be much eaſier without them: but the deſign of providence may clearly be perceived in this proceeding. The motions of the ſun and moon; in ſhort, the whole ſyſtem of the univerſe, as far as philoſophers have been able to diſcover and obſerve, are in the utmoſt degree of regularity and perfection; but whereever God hath left to man the power of interpoſing a remedy by thought or labour, there he hath placed things in a ſtate of imperfection on purpoſe to ſtir up human induſtry, without which life would ſtagnate, or indeed rather could not ſubſiſt at all: *Curis acuunt mortalia corda.*

Praiſe is the daughter of preſent power.

How inconſiſtent is man with himſelf?

I have known ſeveral perſons of great fame for wiſdom in publick affairs and councils governed by fooliſh ſervants.

I have known great miniſters, diſtinguiſhed for wit and learning, who preferred none but dunces.

I have known men of great valour cowards to their wives.

I have known men of the greateſt cunning perpetually cheated.

I knew

I knew three great miniſters, who could exactly compute and ſettle the accompts of a kingdom, but were wholly ignorant of their own œconomy.

The preaching of divines helps to preſerve well-inclined men in the courſe of virtue, but ſeldom or never reclaims the vicious.

Princes uſually make wiſer choices than the ſervants whom they truſt for the diſpoſal of places: I have known a prince, more than once, chuſe an able miniſter; but I never obſerved that miniſter to uſe his credit in the diſpoſal of an employment to a perſon whom he thought the fitteſt for it. One of the greateſt in this age owned and excuſed the matter from the violence of parties, and the unreaſonableneſs of friends.

Small cauſes are ſufficient to make a man uneaſy, when great ones are not in the way: for want of a *block* he will ſtumble at a *ſtraw*.

Dignity, high ſtation, or great riches, are in ſome ſort neceſſary to old men, in order to keep the younger at a diſtance,

who are otherwiſe too apt to inſult them upon the ſcore of their age.

Every man deſires to live long; but no man would be old.

Love of flattery in moſt men proceeds from the mean opinion they have of themſelves; in women from the contrary.

If books and laws continue to increaſe as they have done for fifty years paſt, I am in ſome concern for future ages, how any man will be learned, or any man a lawyer.

Kings are commonly ſaid to have *long hands*; I wiſh they had as *long ears*.

Princes in their infancy, childhood, and youth, are ſaid to diſcover prodigious parts and wit, to ſpeak things that ſurprize and aſtoniſh: ſtrange, ſo many hopeful princes, and ſo many ſhameful kings! If they happen to die young, they would have been prodigies of wiſdom and virtue: if they live, they are often prodigies indeed, but of another ſort.

Politicks, as the word is commonly underſtood, are nothing but corruptions, and conſequently of no uſe to a good king, or a good miniſtry; for which reaſon

ſon courts are ſo over-run with politicks.

Silenus, the foſter-father of *Bacchus*, is always carried by an *aſs*, and has horns on his head. The moral is, that drunkards are led by fools, and have a great chance to be cuckolds.

Venus, a beautiful good-natured lady, was the goddeſs of love; *Juno*, a terrible ſhrew, the goddeſs of marriage: and they were always mortal enemies.

Thoſe who are againſt religion, muſt needs be fools; and therefore we read that, of all animals, God refuſed the *firſt-born* of an aſs.

A very little wit is valued in a woman, as we are pleaſed with a few words ſpoken plain by a parrot.

A nice man is a man of naſty ideas.

Apollo was held the God of phyſick, and ſender of diſeaſes. Both were originally the ſame trade, and ſtill continue.

Old men and comets have been reverenced for the ſame reaſon; their long beards, and pretences to foretel events.

A perſon was aſked at court, what h thought of an ambaſſador, and his trai who were all embroidery and lace, full bo

bows, cringes, and geſtures; he ſaid, it was *Solomon*'s importation, *Gold and apes.*

There is a ſtory in *Pauſanias* of a plot for betraying of a city diſcovered by the braying of an *aſs*: the cackling of *geeſe* ſaved the *capitol*, and *Catiline*'s conſpiracy was diſcovered by a *whore*. Theſe are the only three animals, as far as I remember, famous in hiſtory as *evidences* and *informers.*

Moſt ſorts of diverſion in men, children, and other animals, are an imitation of fighting.

Auguſtus meeting an *aſs* with a *lucky name* foretold himſelf good fortune. I meet many aſſes, but none of them have lucky names.

If a man makes me keep my diſtance, the comfort is, he keeps his at the ſame time.

Who can deny that all men are violent lovers of truth, when we ſee them ſo poſitive in their errors, which they will maintain out of their zeal to truth, although they contradict themſelves every day of their lives?

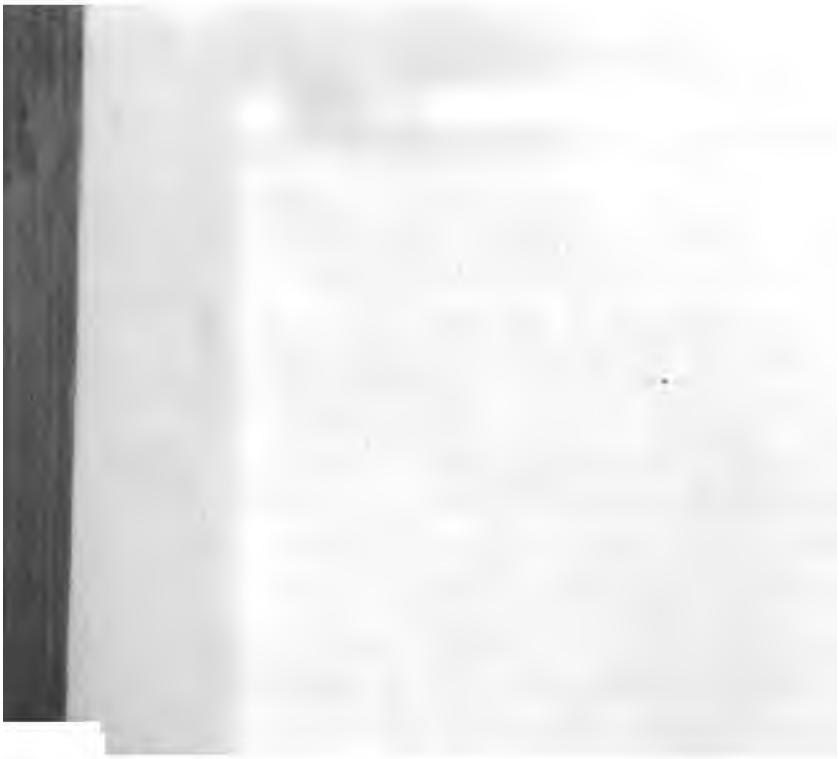
That

That was excellently obſerved, ſay I, when I read a paſſage in an author, where his opinion agrees with mine. When we differ, there I pronounce him to be *miſtaken*.

Very few men, properly ſpeaking, live at preſent, but are providing to live another time.

As univerſal a practice as lying is, and as eaſy one as it ſeems, I do not remember to have heard three good lyes in all my converſation, even from thoſe who were moſt celebrated in that faculty.

F I N I S.



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